

T H E
CHINESE SPY;

O R,
EMISSARY from the Court of
P E K I N,

Commissioned to examine into
THE PRESENT STATE OF EUROPE.

Translated from the CHINESE.

In SIX VOLUMES.

V O L. II.

L O N D O N:
Printed for S. BLADON, in Pater-Noster-Row.

MDCCLXV.

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THE
CHINESE SPY.

LETTER I.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin
Cham-pi-pi at Paris.*

Turin.

THE court of Turin is so small, that without a microscope there is no seeing it. It is a miniature; at first I had some thoughts of buying it, to send it to Pekin, as a very pretty ornament for our sublime emperor's closet. It is only a sketch of magnificence, a copy of dignity, the original of which is to be seen at Versailles. Every thing in it is little, except the king: and it is not the largeness of his size I mean, that being but middling; but he has a great soul.

VOL. II.

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Roy.

Royalty, in this family, is quite recent; and it is not the growth of the country; for this crown comes to him from beyond sea, so that not having been made for his head, it is a great chance whether it will fit him. It is properly no more than a king's commission. The pope grants bulls to bishops; and Europe has given Victor Amadeus a king's patent.

The dukes of Savoy seem intended to be titular kings; they took on themselves the stile of king of Jerusalem, long before adding to it that of the desert island, which at present constitutes their principal title. Thus have they combined an ideal monarchy with a chimerical power: but there's nothing lost in such bargains; or rather one thing is certainly got by it, the title of king.

A Christian prince who throws aside the name of highness to be invested with that of majesty, always finds his account in it; for in Europe, the higher the title, the more respect and confidence.

It is said, that in former times, when the popes were only called bishops, they were contumeliously treated, and sometimes even put to death; but on their arro-



arrogating to themselves the title of saints, their person was held sacred and inviolable. The Jews, a sordid set of people, whose whole faith is lucre, gave credit to a pennyless adventurer, named Theodore, only upon his being proclaimed king by a handful of rebellious ragged mountaineers. Dazzled by this appellation, they trusted him with no inconsiderable sums.

God created the world out of a little mud; and the dukes of Savoy have formed their power from political materials.

Originally the princes of this sovereignty were but private persons, these private persons set up for gentlemen, these gentlemen became dukes, and these dukes founded a city. This city they immediately stiled a state; and afterwards raised it to a kingdom: thus Europe saw a new power erected in it.

In this successive promotion much intrigue was necessary, the mysteries of foreign cabinets were to be seen through, generals faults to be taken advantage of, the activity of some, and the indolence of others to be improved; wars were to be maintained, negotiations to be entered into, marriages to be contracted, alliances to be made, treaties to be signed,

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and, as interest required, to be broken. Thus it is that a government has been formed out of nothing, and a monarchy raised on the foundation of its own insufficiency.

The history of the house of Savoy is the most finished piece of European policy. It exhibits a methodical plan of aggrandizement, a refined ambition, descending from father to son; a scheme of elevation ever consistent, through a succession of ages. The fortune of this house is a spectacle worthy the attention of the universe. It is a coherent system, leading, by insensible gradations, to the summit of human greatness.

Other sovereign houses were sometimes forgetful of their fortune, and often lost sight of themselves; but this never deviated from the path which it had traced for its exaltation. The first foundation of this power had in some measure been laid by nature.

The dukes of Savoy were masters of the keys of Italy, which has ever been an object of emulation among the European potentates; so that other princes were under a necessity of asking them leave to be ambitious; which enabled them-

themselves to be so. They often joined with foreigners to defend this fine country, and sometimes in attacking it: but never did they allow any potentate to make himself master of a part of Italy, without another being secured to them. At each of these dismemberments they took care to be gainers; and every acquisition furnished them with claims to new territories.

These dukes having thus aggrandized themselves by the sword, by intrigue and policy, by an exertion of virtues as well as of vices, were come at length to form a design of extending their conquests. Every thing concurred to the general invasion which they meditated; and the house of Savoy was on the point of swallowing up a great part of the Roman empire, when an event happened which checked its ambition. The story is sad, and the Turin politicians cannot think of it without tears. You shall have an account of it in my next.

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LETTER II.

The same to the same at Paris.

Turin

THE dukes of Savoy, in all ages, whenever they opened the gates of Italy to foreigners, never allowed them to pass through, but with a view of exciting revolutions, of which they might make their advantage. No sooner was their turn served, than they made the invaders cross the Alps again, and shut the doors after them; disliking any neighbours who, by their power, might prove troublesome. The utmost they allowed them, after any conquests, was to send viceroys; however, some years since, the crown of Spain took it into its head to send kings. Naples received one from its hand; this was not worth minding, he being at a great distance and, unable to obstruct any views of aggrandizement; but lately it has placed a king in the center of Italy, and on the very frontiers of Savoy. Emanuel, the present duke, fought like a lion to ward off this blow: his efforts for frustrating this intrusion are scarce to be paralleled.

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He might the rather indulge himself in the hopes of overthrowing the Spanish designs, as the prince whom the court of Madrid intended for his near neighbour was a young man extremely fond of music, and who, on the day of a decisive battle, would trill a song very prettily. Had it not been for the Mexico mines, Emanuel would probably have carried his point: but in Europe there is at present no fighting against gold; battering cannon can do nothing against that metal. Besides, there was a woman's ambition in the case, and in obstinacy that sex has always exceeded the other. This woman would have sold the Indies, Africa, and America, to buy her son a petty principality in Italy, the income of which is not worth mentioning.

Thus Spain prevailed against all the opposition of the court of Turin. The management of this war was irregular: it is scarce to be thought that a power will expend a hundred millions in the purchase of a state which is not worth two; this clashes with all the rules of policy, the maxim of which is interest. This event, however, shut up the duke of Savoy in his capital as in a kind of prison; and at

sent Emanuel is so confined in it, that his politics want elbow-room.

Since this epocha Piedmont has as it were shrunk one half; empires like men being subject to vicissitudes. Six hundred years ago the cabinet here was labouring to become a mighty power, and now it is reduced to a very petty state.

The reigning prince may still strike out resources from the revolutions of Europe, the oversights of courts, the errors of cabinets, and false measures; for all these may be turned to useful instruments in the hands of a wise sovereign, who knows how to make the most of every thing.

Emanuel, who at present fills the throne, governs his dominions as God governs the world; that is, with admirable order and wisdom: he is a great statesman and a great general: the magnanimous prince, and sagacious politician are united in him. He unravels the most secret mysteries of cabinets, and sees into the future occurrences of Europe.

Most monarchs, like common men, are misplaced. Europe has princes, who
with-

without genius and capacity, reign over immense nations; whilst others, fit to govern the universe, have only a handful of subjects.

The life of this prince affords a circumstance, which has scarce a parallel in all the histories of Europe. By a very singular event, the King his father became his subject, and soon after his prisoner. He was put under arrest by his order, and died in confinement. Some, to extenuate this, say, that as things were then circumstanced, there was no doing otherwise; state necessity required it. Such reasons, thou knowest, would not be admitted in China, where all political laws give place to paternal authority. However, this state is as powerful as a small state can be. The King of Sardinia can keep on foot an army of forty thousand men, and, what is still better, can pay it. Other sovereigns, to raise troops, must saddle the subjects with taxes; whereas he can make war, and his people live at their ease. His finances are well managed and in good condition; and arts and trades are brought to the highest pitch of perfection. Piedmont lays France under an annual con-

tribution of several millions by its silks: in a word, the crown enjoys all its prerogatives and advantages; and this, perhaps, is the only government in the Christian world, where all the parts are in proper vigour and consistency.

I have not been able to discover, why this prince allows the subjects of the province, which gives name to his house, to leave the country. Not a year passes without large colonies removing to live and die in another kingdom. The dirt at Paris maintains thirty thousand Savoyards; but such a poor subsistence, I am inclined to think, might be had amidst their own mountains. I have heard several reasons for this, but all too weak to be committed to paper.

The sovereign here is making sea-ports, with a view of setting up a kind of navy; I had rather he would desist. When a state is not thoroughly peopled, and has not within itself the first materials for a large commerce, navigation hurts it; as it deprives the useful trades of hands, for carrying on a branch of business which as yet is unnecessary.

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LETTER III.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Cotao-yu se, at Pekin.

Paris.

IN China the women are not seen; they hide themselves under the veil of modesty, and render themselves invisible to men, even when they appear in their presence. Their dress, which chastity itself seems to have invented, conceals them from every body's eyes.

In Europe the women's cloaths are so transparent, that nothing is hid from the other sex; the eye wantonly roves over all the apartments of voluptuousness. What is a nudity at Pekin, is not so here. At Paris the women are bare from the forehead to below the bosom, from the hand to the elbow, from the foot to the calf of the leg; so that within three feet and a half they are quite naked. Desire has but a short step to its intire gratification: here a lover enjoys near half the woman, before she comes into his possession.

A young person may at her marriage bring an unpolluted body to her husband;

but certainly her chastity goes no farther, having before prostituted herself to the looks of all men. Most of the marriages in Europe are succeeded by an extreme coldness; it is because they add little or nothing to the delight of the senses:

In China, where, by the modesty of apparel, men are debarred the enjoyments of sight, marriage is pregnant with a variety of gratifications. Then it is we enjoy all that the eyes have not yet possessed.

LETTER IV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Superintendent of Religion at Peking.

Paris.

IN this city is an impious foundation, which must necessarily deprave the conscience; the scope of it is to make people think differently from what they first believed: it is called the college of the foreign missions. This sacrilegious institution, making the worship of Christ all in all, would extirpate from the heart the holy principles of other religions.

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The superiors of this house no sooner knew of some Chinese being at Paris, than they determined to convert them to the faith, the name here given to apostacy. They sent to us one of their colleagues, who expressed himself with very insinuating mildness, and seriously advised me to renounce my belief, and embrace his, assuring me, that by so doing, I should gain heaven. He was entering on a long preamble concerning this, when I took the freedom to cut him short: Good Sir, said I, before you take the trouble of corroborating your principles, give me leave to make one overture to you; which is to quit your religion, and come over to that of Confucius; for if you think yourself warranted to induce me to apostacy, I have the same right towards you; and were all things otherwise equal, I have one reason more, my religion is of a longer standing than yours. This proposition silenced my antagonist; he understood by this argument that all which he could offer to me would be ineffectual; and so withdrew.

Never did the human mind start at greater absurdity than that of endeavouring

ing to bring others to our opinion on the manner of worshipping God. Besides the heinousness of the thing, the project is of itself impracticable. To require an unity in religion is like obliging men to breathe the same air. Religions have a manifest affinity with constitutions, and the climates are certainly independent of each other. It is only casting an eye on the form of the universe, to be convinced that the articles of faith cannot possibly be the same among different people. Religions must agree with the civil systems of each state. The Christian worship does not suit Japan better than that of Japan would the French system. The plain consequence is, that missionaries are disturbers of the public peace, and punishable by laws established throughout the whole universe. Though the Turks have, for commercial considerations, allowed the Christians to settle in their empire, they are not to open their mouths about religion.

I have always disliked that maxim of giving the Europeans leave to instil into our people tenets quite foreign to the climate of Pekin. A Chinese Christian is a civil monster; he forgets that

that he has a father, remembering only that there is a pope: this is utterly overthrowing every article of our government, which is formed on paternal authority.

Apostacy is so far from having been of any benefit to the world, that as it proceeds from baseness, it produces flagitiousness. He who departs from his belief, falls from the virtues annexed to his primitive religion, and gives into all the vices of the new. Earth loses by it, without heaven's being any gainer. I think, that for the order and peace of the universe, princes should agree in a general law, making the change of religion certain death. I don't say that men should be forced to worship the deity in one manner preferably to another; this would be tyranny: but they should be obliged to keep to that particular manner of worship they had once professed. This, instead of a moral regulation, being a coercive law, would be found more advantageous to society than the best institutions hitherto known.

LETTER V.

Sequel of the great Epochs of Europe.

Paris.

AMIDST the revolutions which shook Europe the see of Rome went on aggrandizing itself. Of all the governments among mankind never did any subsist longer, and with less interruption; and this, because the popes governed the world by persuasion; whereas conquerors had subdued it by arms, which are never so strong as to be above vicissitudes.

The annals of this new empire deserve a particular attention; yet hitherto veracity and precision are wanting in them. All its historians have disfigured it; the authors who are of the religion of the popes, extol it beyond all reason; and they who are of a different belief as extravagantly inveigh against it.

It is impossible for one, who is or is not of this communion, to treat this subject without partiality. He should be neither European nor Christian, otherwise

wife he will certainly be prejudiced for or against.

The Roman church originally constituted a kind of aristocratical government; the bishops and abbots (for the college of cardinals, as it is called, was not then known) formed its senate; the rest of the clergy were the plebeians. The chief then had but little influence; the power of the popes at that time being pretty much like the authority of the doges of Venice, who are no more than the shadow of that power, of which they represent the body.

The bishops often refused to comply with the pope's pleasure, looking on him only as a brother; they made use against him of that very authority which they held of him: but as among the Europeans every thing degenerates into despotism, the popes, by degrees, ingrossed likewise the political and civil power; and the ecclesiastical commonwealth became an absolute monarchy.

Rome underwent a total change, when a community of poor Mandarins living on alms, became a large and splendid ecclesiastical state.

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The primary plan did not suit this elevation, as having been founded on Christian humility and charity : these virtues constituted only believers, and subjects were what Rome insisted on.

But how to throw off that state of lowliness she had been placed in by the very religion of Christ ? This is a point the European writers seem to slur over too negligently ; it being a revolution to be classed among the principal events of the universe. Sects had been known to make their way to power by struggle and violence ; but this was the only one which had acquired dominion by intrigues.

The see of Rome did not owe its empire to fortuitous circumstances ; it was the effect of a methodical plan.

This church is a master-piece of human policy ; it is not founded on a system of religion, but on the knowledge of the human heart : it had the art to profit by its weakness, and to reap advantage from its very insufficiency. Pagan Rome never made use of so much artifice to aggrandize itself. The policy of the Cæsars is nothing in comparison to that of the popes. I cannot forbear endeavouring to give you a sketch of it. The

The most active governments in the world had their intervals of indolence, in which they lost sight of their power; whereas the policy of the see of Rome never had a single instant of intermission: its eye was incessantly fixed on its elevation.

It has risen from the lowest contempt and weakness to a supreme sovereignty, and maintained itself for the long space of eight hundred centuries. In its critical periods it kept itself from being crushed under the weight of vicissitudes; and though it had some falls, it was only to rise again in greater lustre: it has not been without its reverses; it has been affronted and outraged; its power, its very existence has been attacked: but without being intimidated, it overlooked all kinds of indignities, when it thought they might be made subservient to its grandeur.

The popes were without passions; whatever violence were committed against them, if dragged to loathsome prisons, if grossly insulted, and even cruelly beaten, they bore with every thing, when any little addition might be made to their power. They seemed cordially to
pardon,

pardon, and never shewed any resentment, but when revenge would promote their interest. It is impossible for men to carry on a scheme with more circumspection and address.

The Holy see, (for so this court is called) did commit some slips, one of the principal of which was applying for foreign assistance to support its power. But this step, which was enough to ruin any other government, did not much affect that of Rome. The strength of the general institution corrected the errors of private administration.

Its throne has been filled by several flagitious and impious popes. One would have thought that their profligacy must have weakened it; but Rome had fundamental laws, which supported it against the transitory vices of its heads. The structure of its power, though liable to be shaken, could not be overthrown.

When the see of Rome was little, it concealed its littleness with such dexterity, as not to be perceived; but when grown up, it filled the universe with its name.

It did not stay to be in the way of elevation to lay the foundations of its greatness. Amidst weakness and contempt, it proposed to itself the two following maxims, *primacy in spirituals, and despotism in temporals*. If quick in the formation of its designs, it was slow in the execution, but herein more certain of compassing them; it had nothing of that ardour and impetuosity so often the bane of political affairs. Whilst other sovereigns went precipitately blundering on, Rome made no haste, but walked on leisurely; and thus effected its purpose.

Excommunications were the usual weapons of the popes: this was a power they had acquired of excluding men from society; and it rendered them so hideous, that children ran away from their fathers, wives forsook their husbands, and subjects abhorred their lawful prince. Whence the popes had derived this odious privilege, which stamped such a disgrace on human nature, has never been known. It supplied the place of cannon, as in a civil sense it slaughtered the Europeans. They whom it struck could no longer return among the living, without being absolved, and such
absolu-

absolution always led to some private end. Princes themselves dreaded these excommunications more than all the military force of their enemies. There was not one sovereign house on whom these anathemas were not discharged. Rome's constant way was to begin with negotiating and end with excommunicating. Kings, who, in their political quarrels with her, were for asserting their rights by arms, were sure to be excommunicated; and this deprived them of the very means of natural defence. If a prince pretended to reassume the possession of a demesne, which had formerly been usurped by the church, he was declared a heretic; this, at once, raised a general indignation against him, and was the first step for weakening his power.

The absolution of sins committed by sovereigns were another source of aggrandizement: this often was not to be obtained under the cession of their prerogatives, and sometimes even of their dominions.

Interdicts against nations were a fourth spring which its policy often put in play with great effect. Though princes sometimes have shewn a contempt of them,

much oftener were they frightened; and, to avert them, did what open force would never have brought them to. Though these weapons at length became blunted, it was not till they subjected to Rome several courts, who have ever since continued in its interest.

The remission of crimes, a power which she reserved to herself alone, was also made use of for the augmentation of her greatness. When any considerable usurpation was found to tally with her interests, she countenanced it. A pope solemnly promised a king the absolution of all his sins, on his making a conquest of England.

Rome made use of superstition, not only for deceiving common people, but even for imposing on princes. Among other examples with which its history abounds, I meet with a letter which proves it to all intents and purposes. A pope, being in want of an army to save him from a Lombard King his neighbour, pretended to a correspondence with heaven; he published a letter, which he said he had received from the mansion of the deity. It was dated from Paradise, and written by St. Peter's own hand, to a prince, who,

who, having a large body of good troops, was able to deliver Rome from the danger she was in. Peter gives the title of excellency to this prince, though a villain and an usurper: by this, I suppose the negotiations of heaven to be like those on earth, full of adulation and servility to such as we stand in need of. However it be, never was such condescension and submission from a saint, when writing only to a man.

He plainly informs him that the mother of Christ would be exceedingly obliged to him, if he would side with the popes, in support of their rights; and declares, to him, that if he forbears shedding the blood of wicked mortals in the pope's cause, he must expect no place in heaven.

This letter is a contrivance which has not its equal; the obligation of God's mother to a man, a saint's intreaty to commit massacres, and all to acquire eternal glory, prove the popes, throughout all ages, to have stuck at nothing for gaining their ends.

Rome had so well tutored the Christian nations to consider her as the only deity on earth, that she conceited herself
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impowered to punish, without measure, all who offended her, charging to religion what was only the effect of policy: thus she struck Europe with such terror, that very few Christian princes dared pre-meditately to attempt the suppressing or curtailing her power.

We have before seen how she stimulated the Christian princes to engage in the croisades; and when she had brought them to her lure, then all her thoughts were to reap the benefit of their conquests.

This policy of the croisades was of signal use to her; the greater part of these warriors divested themselves of their estates in favour of the church.

She farther pretended, under colour of religion, that a conquest made by a Christian prince over infidels belonged to her. On this supposititious right it was, that a pope required a tribute of two marks of gold from a warrior, named Alphonso, who had taken Portugal from the Moors.

LETTER VI.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin
Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Turin.

THE maxims of the European princes are utterly inconsistent ; they would have their people virtuous, and at the same time do all they can to encourage those vices which hinder them from being so.

The King of Sardinia allows games of chance ; whence you may judge, to what a degree of refinement they are carried here.

At Lacedæmon theft was permitted, and in Piedmont cheating is little less ; the subjects have the prince's permission for it ; so far from being a blemish at Turin, it is looked on as a kind of accomplishment.

Other states of Europe have their academies of sciences ; at Turin the principal academy is that of gaming, so that mere boys are perfectly skilled in this art.

To make the greater progress in it, they begin early ; it is a part of Piedmontese

tese education. The art of card-playing is taught here as geometry in other countries. It has its rules and principles: if any one happens to be caught in cheating at play, this does not bring on him the character of a dishonest man; he is looked on only as a bungler. "It is a
"pity, said a Piedmontese lately, speaking of a gentleman of his acquaintance,
"he is a young fellow of great honour,
"and would not do a dirty thing for his
"life; but in tricking at play, he is so
"miserably awkward, that one blushes
"for him."

Here they will demonstrate to you, that cheating at play is morally lawful. "Play, say these casuists, is a traffic,
"therefore cunning is allowed in it. A
"tradesman has darkish warehouses,
"where you see his goods, as it were,
"but by halves; and pray who goes about to say there is any thing dishonest in it? No, it is reckoned skill in
"his profession. And wherefore then
"should any other appellation be given
"to him who makes the most at play."
Such is the morality of this country; and in the religion of gaming there is not one single heretic; here the Piedmontese

are exemplarily devout, I might even say, they are bigotted to it.

Most of the houses in Turin are public gaming houses, where every one is welcome for his money. Gaming is all the talk in the king's anti-chamber, as politics in that of the other European sovereigns. The very monarch himself will familiarly discourse of it with his subjects. "How has gaming turned out with you this year?" said Emanuel lately to one of his old generals. Not so well, Sire, said he, as usual; your young officers are devilish keen-sighted; and as alert and circumspect at cards as in action, where they are to acquire glory and preferment."

Finesse at play is common to both sexes, and women of the first rank make no secret of their talents this way. I heard two ladies of quality give an account of their achievements at the card-table in the following manner. "How much may your ladyship have gained by over-reaching at play this year? A very trifle, answered she, scarce twenty thousand livres. And you, lady marchioness, what may your cheating amount to? I have had no better luck
" than

“ than yourself, thirty thousand livres is
 “ the utmost. Men, continued the lat-
 “ ter, daily grow more difficult to be
 “ dealt with at play: love will soon be
 “ the only thing in which we shall be
 “ able to impose on them.”

Cards and dice are the principal concerns here; they take up every bodies thoughts by day, and their dreams by night. At Turin instead of sleeping they game, even to the ruin of their constitutions: nature is allowed no respite, all the time, when they are not gaming, is looked upon as lost.

To this folly the fair sex sacrifice all their other inclinations; for gaming they renounce the pleasure of pleasing, which was ever their leading passion. In other countries the women lay snares for the heart, but here their design is only on the purse: a gentleman, who should be so far wanting in complaisance, as not willingly to lose his money, offends against the fundamental rules of Piedmontese gallantry. To carry one's point with the Turin ladies, is the best way to overlook their finesses at play, and lose one's money with a good air.

In the other parts of Europe a woman's favour is gained by songs, ballads, and amorous verses. Here a lover gains his ends by oversights, mistakes, and blunders at play. A gentleman, who goes this way to work, shews himself a good proficient; it is the capital point in the art of love. Whereas, he who should be so dull, as not to be awkward at cards, to play with attention, and commit no faults, is looked upon as a clown.

I had observed a certain gentleman to be always alone, neither the men speaking to him, nor the women looking at him; and one day I asked who he was. "He is a
" very regular man, said one, takes care
" of his estate, never plays at cards. In
" a word, his company is quite insupportable; accordingly no body visits
" him."

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LETTER VII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin prime Minister, at Peking.

Paris:

FRANCE has schools for all sciences, except that of the administration. Those who are advanced to power seldom pass through any degrees. The prince's nomination must be thought to confer all the necessary knowledge, capacity, and qualifications.

I have been told of a physician who gave his gown as a legacy to a society of country physicians; and a novice putting it on, immediately becomes an adept in the medical art.

When his majesty of France appoints any subject of his to the ministry, he immediately becomes a minister, that is, able to manage the affairs of the kingdom without having ever learned any thing of the matter. One would think that herein the command of the prince was like the magical words of force-rers, instantaneously infusing supernatural knowledge. God in the formation of the globe made use of mud, and the King of

France very often makes a minister from dirt.

Here the ministry is not attained to by degrees; they who rise to it are always impelled by a rapid projection, without any sensible void between their present height, and the low station from which they were removed: and generally their flight is over the heads of assiduous, able, and honest men, whose long services intitle them to distinction.

LETTER VIII.

The same to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

THE education of the Kings of Europe is incumbered with numberless troubles; they must apply themselves to learn several foreign languages at once; they are taught history, geography, and heraldry.

Governors and sub-governors are placed over them, who cram them with various knowlege, besides a crowd of masters, for forming them to all bodily graces. Such an extensive education, instead

stead of leading princes up to the throne, misplaces them. A minor sovereign, thus diverted from the principal science, to bestow his application on so many accessories, can be little capable of governing a nation.

It is observed, in general, that they who are made to learn so many things, never know any one thoroughly; the rule is the same with kings, besides its not being decent for a King to know so many useless things.

The education of sovereigns should be different from that of common men, limited to a few capital maxims, short and easily learnt; and their whole study to put them in practice.

A Chinese minister presented the following set of instructions to one of our emperors, who was but eighteen years of age: I look on it as a compendium of the art of reigning. "Fear God. Love
 " your subjects. Employ men of merit. Readily hearken to good advice. Lower taxes. Mitigate punishments. Explode prodigality. Set good examples. Avoid luxury. Detest vicious pleasures."

A monarch, with only this knowledge, would be infinitely better qualified than another, versed in ever so many superfluous sciences.

LETTER IX.

Sequel of the great Epochs of Europe, and of the Court of Rome.

Paris.

THE popes, originally only Mandarin bishops, made themselves princes. This was a prelude of their future greatness. Names are the main point in Europe; for the people, however, averse from complying with the will of men like themselves, take a pride in obeying those who are called princes. Thus such a title, as would dazzle the eyes of the world, became necessary to the popes.

They collected immense riches, and that the source of wealth might be in the state, they coined money: this they did, who, at first, preached poverty, and openly declared their kingdom not to be of this world.

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Their policy ever was to make the worship subservient to their ambition. They made use of religion for laying the foundations of their over-grown fortune.

It was by fixing the eyes of believers on a road to heaven of their own tracing, that they stripped them of the goods of the earth.

The nations were not gained over by convincing them of the truth and holiness of Christ's worship. At Rome they believed little or nothing of what was taught. Some popes denied the being of a God, others were accused of dealing with the devil.

What is called at Rome the *propaganda fides*, contributed more to its elevation, than all the forces of the whole world together had to the power of the ancient commonwealth. This was the cabinet which furnished ambassadors for negotiating the affair of religion with all the nations on earth. They called themselves missionaries or apostolic men; for it has ever been one of Rome's constant maxims to erect the enormous statue of its pride on the pedestal of abasement. They were generals, who, only with the book

of the Christian faith, gained most advantageous victories for her.

Pagan Rome had acquired citizens all over the then known earth. Christian Rome procured itself submissive subjects throughout all the world.

Among the Europeans titles beget respect. To be accounted divine, it is but borrowing the name of the deity. The popes assumed the stile of saints, and found their account in thus dignifying themselves.

Till then the most lofty monarchs of the earth required only prostrations before them ; but the more arrogant popes ordered that they who approached them should kiss their feet ; and crowned heads, to the eternal disgrace of the European thrones, were not exempted from this debasement.

Kings had worn only one crown, and that was full enough for degrading mankind, whom nature never made for abject subordination. The popes would have a triple crown, indicating thereby that sovereigns and people were to be subject to them.

Still one thing was wanting ; a holiness liable to mistake and error, would have

have been very imperfect: hereupon they assumed to themselves infallibility.

This pretension to infallibility was a masterly stroke for the sacred see. Nothing was any longer doubted of. Every thing was seen blindly. It facilitated the erection of another odious tribunal, called the Inquisition, which inspiring an awful terror in things of any concern to the papal power, was of great use to the popes. I know not any thing that contributed more to the consolidation of their authority.

Christian Rome had clients and emissaries in all the public schools in Europe, for strengthening its authority, and these were continually inculcating her superiority over secular powers. They publickly maintained that the pope's prerogatives was unlimited and absolute both in spirituals and temporals. A question was often discussed whether a king disobeying a pope might not be killed; and though this maxim was not often put in practice, still it heightened the papal authority.

To increase the number of its subjects, and alienate those of other states, Rome encouraged the ecclesiastical profession
with

with the conveniencies and enjoyments of life; she likewise annexed ranks, distinctions, and honours to meanness itself. In its quarrels with temporal powers, she always took care to bring in religion; and so artfully did she interweave her concerns with those of heaven, that to defend the cause of the pope was thought defending that of God.

Her practice ever was to divide the principal church-dignities among the great men of different states. She created cardinals of all nations, and these were so many popes residing in the different countries of Europe. Thus Christian Rome had its see in all courts, and its court in every palace.

By her title of spiritual father she promoted her temporal claims. As this appellation gave her a right of enquiring into the domestic affairs of princes, in order to an equitable determination of their differences, she made use of it for bringing about her particular designs.

A very advantageous traffic she carried on on was in distributing a multitude of credentials for admission into heaven; she likewise made a great many saints, for she had persuaded people that she had such

such a power. This power was not maintained by a levy of soldiers, but by relics which were every where worshipped: for every saint had a body, and every body was deposited somewhere. These hosts of sacred corpes often were known to arrest the impetuosity of the living; the most sanguinary rage was awed into peace and stillness at the sight of those holy bones.

Rome during its hottest persecutions found means to shelter itself; the ashes of its canonized saints were a secure fence to it: there was not a state, kingdom, province or town, which had not one or more of them; and hence it derived an universal sway; for they who venerated these saints would, of course, respect the popes who had the power of making them such.

LETTER X.

The same to the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

WHEN I am for improving my acquaintance with the affairs of Europe, I repair to a private meeting, which

which is regularly held twice a week, at a connoisseur's in politics.

The other day the president of our council brought on the carpet three points of very great importance. He asked, whether France ought to have concerned itself in the present German war? Whether the alliance of the house of Austria with that of Bourbon promised any great advantage to the latter? Where, supposing that France had been obliged to declare itself, the present war should have been begun?

Hereupon a member of the assembly spoke as follows:

“ The part our government has been
“ pleased to take in the affairs of the
“ North, is a trespass against good po-
“ licy, which required a precise neu-
“ trality; there was nothing for us to
“ get by engaging in this war, but a
“ deal to lose. On whatsoever side
“ France had caused the scale to turn,
“ still would it have been to its detri-
“ ment; for either the house of Austria,
“ by its assistance, would have crushed
“ that of Brandenburg, and in this
“ case she would have promoted the ag-
“ grandizement of that house, than
“ which

“ which nothing can be more contrary
 “ to our constant maxims : or the King
 “ of Prussia, on France’s interfering in
 “ this war, would have applied to po-
 “ tent allies, and thus have overpower-
 “ ed the house of Austria; in which case
 “ this potentate, being no longer imped-
 “ ed by any barrier in the North, might
 “ cross the Rhine, and carry his arms
 “ against France : therefore, had we
 “ only furnished our quota, we should
 “ have kept the scale even.

“ England, then, would not have sent
 “ an army into Germany ; and the sieges
 “ and battles between the King of Prus-
 “ sia and the queen of Hungary, weak-
 “ ening those two potentates, would con-
 “ sequentially have added to our strength.
 “ When two rival houses fall out, no
 “ assistance should be given to one,
 “ whereby it may soon get the better of
 “ the other : true policy should only look
 “ on, and leave them to ruin each
 “ other.”

He then proceeded to the second point.
 “ The alliance of France with the house
 “ of Austria is a direct solecism against
 “ the general system ; it is one of your
 “ forced strokes of policy, it is neither
 “ more

“ more nor less than going about to
“ unite fire and water.

“ General systems have taken place in
“ Europe, and such are never to be
“ overthrown by some particular combi-
“ nations. Never will the house of
“ Bourbon heartily labour to increase
“ Austria's power ; and as little will the
“ house of Austria employ itself in aug-
“ menting the strength of that of Bour-
“ bon.”

The third question he thus discussed.

“ Supposing, added he, as has been
“ given out, that France could not avoid
“ taking part in the present differences,
“ the war should have begun with Eng-
“ land ; there it was that the first blow
“ should have been struck.

“ It was said of the Romans that they
“ were to be conquered only at Rome ;
“ and the like has been said of some other
“ nations, accounted invincible.

“ The experience of every age and
“ nation has shewn that a people carry-
“ ing the war to distant parts, and strong
“ abroad, are generally very weak at
“ home.

“ The first step should have been to
“ have gone, and laid siege to London.

“ When

When a nation has impaired itself by a lethargic slumber of several ages, it has only one way of recovering, which is to strike a signal blow. It has been said, and even published in print, that to convey a French army over into England was utterly impracticable; but it was wrong to say so, and worse to publish it.

“ Perhaps now, that every thing is gone to wreck, such an attempt would be found very difficult; but at the beginning of the war it bid fair to succeed.

“ When a monarchy, with so many resources as France, centers all its views in one point, it is next to impossible, but it must in some measure succeed. All other schemes should have been limited to this, and Europe left to itself, till after this expedition.

“ We had then something of a navy, and the whole of it ought to have been employed in escorting the flat-bottomed boats, built for carrying over the troops. Had the army made good its landing, no matter though the remainder of the French navy had gone to the bottom at once. Such a bold stroke

“ would

“ would have stunned all England ; we
“ should then at least have tried a way,
“ which alone could put our affairs on a
“ good footing. Even had we miscar-
“ ried, still would the Britons have ever
“ been in a panic ; they know that they
“ could not stand it long, when once
“ France had opened this door. The
“ very worst that could have befallen us,
“ was to have been then reduced to
“ what we are now. As it is, our navy
“ has been gradually brought to no-
“ thing ; it would have been much bet-
“ ter to expose the whole of it at once,
“ in an expedition by which we might
“ have trampled on the necks of our
“ most formidable enemy.

“ When one maritime power is supe-
“ rior to another, particular engagements
“ are very detrimental to the inferior
“ party ; it goes on ruining itself by piece-
“ meals : whereas a general action might
“ recover it in one day.

LET-

LETTER XI.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Turin.

Almost all the princes of Europe have in their pay bands of music, as fiddlers, players on fifes, flutes, and hautboys, to keep them from the spleen; nay, they have buffoons to make them laugh.

The King of Sardinia is thought to have the best music, whence he is concluded to be a great prince, by having procured to himself a perfect harmony, which in government is a very considerable part of the art of sovereignty.

There is also an Italian opera at his court, but I don't find that it is the best piece of music. At the French opera there is speaking and no singing, at the Italian singing and no speaking; a lover breaks his passion to his mistress with only one vowel, but which he trols about in his mouth, for a quarter of an hour together.

The Italians are said to be very lively in their passions; whereas to me they seem

seem quite phlegmatic. Were a Chinese to bestow so much time in expressing his sufferings, he would die of a consumption.

At the playhouse in Paris one contracts disorders which hinders one from sleeping; and that of Turin is of a somniferous quality; the spectators have there the benefit of being as quiet as in their beds. During the three acts, of which an opera consists, one might take a comfortable nap, were it not for the noise of the *arriettas*.

For my part, to me they are quite tiresome: every body tells me the fault lies in myself, or rather in my organs, which are not of a delicacy to feel the charms of this music. What most offends me at this play is, to hear a female voice from the mouth of a man. I cannot help thinking it a kind of affront to the ancient heroes, to make them sing with such shrill voices. The generals of armies have such effeminate pipes, that it would be impossible for troops not to laugh at their word of command.

They tell me over and over that the personages represented in operas are the most illustrious men of antiquity; still I take

take Cæsar for a woman, and Alexander for a girl. So much on this head: thou wilt see Italian operas in England, and then judge for thy self.

LETTER XII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tou-nā, at Peking.

Paris.

THERE are people at Paris, who, for money, teach the science of divination. What surprizes me in this wonderful study is, that its professors, who boast that the most secret events of futurity lie open to them, are starving, and obliged to impose on the public for a livelihood.

This is now generally held to be only an imposture, after being for a long time accounted in Europe the only true science; for the Messiah's religion did not disperse the darkness of human understanding, but left the mind as it found it. It was atheism, which, in the last century, took on it's self to explode this weakness from the human heart: a remedy worse than the disease.

Christen-

Christendom was formerly full of forcerers, wizards, and conjurers. The courts of justice, consisting of judges, who had little of conjuration in them, took cognizance of magic, and without mercy put to death all who practised that mystery. I fancy they who were above any such idle notions, must have been highly diverted to see men burnt, who pretended to have a power of stopping the course of nature, and were not able to avert the effect of a faggot or two. The fire indeed did not destroy the wizards; they always rose again out of the ashes of magic.

It is not any very long time since the extinction of this distemper, which proves knowledge to have made but a slow progress in Europe.

Now this letter perhaps may not please you the less, if I give you here a concise history of witchcraft, which I have collected from several grave authors; for in Europe they write on every thing, even to the elements of folly.

Magic was divided into several branches, the natural, which was nothing but the different combinations of the development of matter; and so far a man
might

might be a magician without being a forcerer. A person who, transmitting the rays of the sun through a glass, and thus increasing the degree of heat, brought fruits to ripen before their natural time, was supposed to possess this supernatural science.

The second magic was derived from art; a mathematician, who by the friction of matter, produced sounds, or made a statue utter words, was reputed a magician.

The third kind of magic was medicinal; compositions which excited a delirium, were distinguished by that appellation. Till then every thing in magic was natural, and to be such a magician was sufficient to be reckoned a forcerer; but a great abuse soon followed. This science was turned into fraud and imposture. It teemed with wizards and witches, charms, spells, and fascinations, which turned the brains of many Europeans, and filled this part of the world with the most extravagant errors, conceits, and delusions.

Some magic words were supposed to have such a power as to unhinge the firmament, and change the course of the

stars. Few made any question but that forcerers often brought the moon down from heaven.

When fancy could supply no farther means of seducing human credulity, the products of nature were brought in play; and plants became magical.

Some herbs were affirmed to stop the tides, to dry up rivers; and others could raise the dead.

An impostor, famous in the European world by the name of Agrippa, pretended to be possessed of a magical secret for producing a man out of a hen's egg.

The forcerers not only exhibited magic on earth, but gave out that hell was concerned in a species of it. Hereupon devils were let loose in the world, and Europe became full of demoniacs. Some wretches had no less than ten thousand devils within their bodies; but the Christian mandarins invented a counter-magic, still more astonishing: with a few words and some drops of water they quickly dislodged the devils; and so readily did these evil spirits yield to exorcisms, that they seemed to exercise their power only to shew their weakness.

Some

Some forcerers knew every thing which was to come to pass in the universe; there was only one thing hid from them, the day of their execution.

Love also had its forcerers and magicians, whose business was to furnish lovers with the means of being equally beloved by their mistresses. Of the wonders performed by magical rings in those times, the following is a remarkable and even attested instance.

A prince was so enamoured with a woman as to neglect all the concerns of government; and even on the death of his favourite, the violence of his passion rather increased, so that he could never leave her corpse; it appeared to him as beautiful as in the bloom of life: but a mandarin archbishop, laying hold of the opportunity when the prince went for some necessary purpose out of the room, took from her a ring in which was the love-spell. The monarch, on his return, saw his mistress in her real state, a fetid loathsome corpse, and ordered it to be immediately removed; but his love, attracted by the ring, turned intirely towards the archbishop, as its favourite object.

Sieges and battles depended on magic. Generals often used to concert measures with enchanterers for defeating the enemy; this was very convenient, as a magician could supply the want of military force.

Beasts likewise sometimes felt the power of forcerers. An European history tells us that a people along the Weser, being much pestered with rats, contracted with a magician to clear the country of that mischievous vermin. He only took a flute, and began to play on it: the rats, enchanted by his melody, gathered about him wherever he went; but upon his walking into the river, they heedlessly followed him, and were all drowned.

Some magicians dealt in storms and tempests; others could confine the winds, and keep them shut up in asses hides.

For a long time a piece of wood, called a wand, acted the part of a forcerer with success. The first use made of it was for discovering waters; but afterwards its virtue was extended to the finding things lost, and detecting thefts and murders.

A power was attributed to magicians, which had it been real, must have rendered them masters of every sovereign's life.

They

They were said to make waxen figures, resembling those against whom the mischief was intended; and on their melting these images, the living originals pined away, and died by inches.

Another strange effect of magic, but universally believed, was to make men invisible. This conjuration was of great use, especially to lovers, who thus eluded the watchful eyes of jealousy. It is said to have occasioned the erection of a court of inquisition in Spain and Portugal, where sorcerers are burnt; but this would be an unreasonable tyranny against the votaries of love; an invisible gallant, being of course impalpable, is little to be feared.

Besides magicians there were also books of magic, and the sorcery lay in the characters; so that often a printer was a sorcerer, without knowing any thing of the matter.

All these reveries and extravagancies were current among what the Christians call the church, and received the sanction of kings and popes; for that this folly might strike the deeper root, care was taken to give it all possible authenticity.

LETTER XIII.

*Sequel of the great Epochas of Europe, and
of the Court of Rome.*

Paris.

ROME laid it down for a maxim, that she alone had the privilege of imposing taxes on ecclesiastics, and by persisting in this maxim came to be believed. A count of Anjou bound himself to pay her annually two thousand marks of gold, as an acknowledgment for the kingdom of Naples, on condition of being allowed to levy a tribute on the French clergy.

If a monarch happened to be so perverse as to refuse her a territory which was convenient for her purpose, she declared him a rebel to the church, and immediately ordered a croisade against him. He was used like a Mahometan for not having Christianity enough to give up all his possessions. This was a tyranny till then unknown in any part of the world.

This same court had the art of inspiring such a respect and veneration for its character, as to introduce abuses both
into

into political and civil laws; even all mankind was a sufferer by it. A Christian prince, being taken prisoner in defending his dominions, was condemned to lose his head for having, as his sentence expressed it, taken arms against the church: horrid injustice! for were the church a body politic, where was the great crime of fighting against it? The sacrilege should have ended, where the civil state began.

Rome also availed herself of a weakness then common, and still subsisting among Christian princes, though no otherwise to be accounted for, than that the world has always been governed by opinion. Princes had frequently the spirit to insult the persons of refractory popes, and even to dethrone, imprison, and load them with chains; yet history scarce affords an instance of any one who ever went so far as to marry his niece, or dismiss his wife, without the pope's permission. How much such a notion must have forwarded the policy of the bishops of Rome is obvious; as thus they were enabled to hinder any alliances which might hurt their interest: they either insisted on this power, or re-

ceded from it, just as it best suited their conveniency.

They have been known to debar some monarchs from marrying their cousins in the fourth degree; at other times, princes have been exhorted by them to divorce wives whom they had lawfully married.

After thus laying the foundation of a spiritual power, Rome had but one step to make in establishing its temporal authority. In imitation of the antient republic it erected a tribunal, which was to take cognizance of the affairs of the whole world. This tribunal decided the most important causes in Europe.

The popes, by their power and authority, ordered, that several kingdoms should change rulers, and devolve to other sovereigns. They deposed kings without number, and conferred their crowns on whom they pleased; some were deprived of their goods and substance, and reduced to live on charity.

Rome had accumulated territories, so as to form a large domain. As to the means by which she acquired it, the history of Europe is silent: the legality of her possessions rests merely on uncertainties. One
may

may easily see that she usurped them. We need only take a survey of the state of this part of the world, at the time of her making this acquisition. All the dominions of Europe then were alienations from the Roman empire; the princes who had usurped them, could not give away legally what was illegally obtained.

Rome cited grants from the Cæsars; but the policy of the emperors having always been to diminish the power of the popes, it is not at all probable that they contributed to their aggrandizement. But had they been willing, it was more than they could do. They had no right to impoverish Europe to enrich the see of Rome, unless there be a law of nations by which a thing stolen, on being transferred to a third person, becomes a lawful acquisition. However, the see of Rome continues in the peaceful enjoyment of its dominions, just as if it had the greatest right in the world to them.

In perusing the annals of Christendom, you seldom meet with a reigning family, whom the popes have not deposed.

This jurisdiction they have made general, and extended it even to the private

transactions of individuals. I have read in the said annals that a Christian named Montfort having taken away the child of Peter, king of Arragon, the queen, its mother, went herself, and pleaded for the restitution of her child before this tribunal. Its decree was, that Montfort should restore the child, which he accordingly did. From this single passage some idea may be formed of the ascendancy of the popes over princes : and if the great were thus submissive, what must must we think of the common people?

Rome not only required obedience to itself, but even to the meanest instrument of its power ; a monk carrying an order from it, was to be respected.

In a religious war, one brother Ramir laid about him with excommunications and interdicts against whomsoever he pleased, without respect to persons. When a king, who had been tributary to this see, happened to die without issue, she claimed his crown.

She sometimes seemed to give up her privileges, but it was only to strengthen her authority. If she made Charlemain great, it was only to curtail the power of his successors.

A practice she never departed from was, to countenance usurpations when conducive to her designs.

It was to no purpose for princes, who presume to contest with her, to shew the justness of their claims: the most sacred laws of Europe were of no weight with Rome against its interest.

One Pepin had usurped the crown of France; yet Rome acknowledged him as lawful sovereign, and threatened to fulminate its anathemas against any who should dare to set up a king of another house. The motive for this was, that the usurper had the power in his hands, and made large promises to Rome for favouring his usurpation.

As it had been a standing maxim with her to be the center of politics in regard to the Christian world, and this required a knowledge of every thing that was doing in Europe, she kept a journal of all occurrences among princes: in order to this she had agents in all courts, who interfered in every thing, and there was no transaction which they did not pry into. Their usual residence was near sovereigns; here they insinuated themselves into the inmost recesses

of state intrigues; no secrets of royal families escaped them. They even took upon them to sift into the mystery of their beds.

They particularly endeavoured to find out the vices and virtues of princes, and to know their weak side. Rome had immediate intelligence thereof, and took its measures accordingly.

Exact accounts were sent to it of the present state of nations, their strength, the number, and condition of their troops, their systems of œconomy, and annual revenue. Thus, by means of this general correspondence, the great mandarins were acquainted with the power and situation of every political state.

These emissaries kept near the sovereign, - followed him in his different journies and diversions, and even accompanied him in war: for as unforeseen events might change the course of affairs, they were determined to have the earliest intelligence, that no other power might take any advantage of them.

These agents, who are called nuncios, generally talked very big, and often threatened sovereigns, thus disciplining them

them into a blind submission to the popes. It was usual for them to mix the concerns of heaven with those of earth; but what still more promoted their interest, they so effectually instilled their maxims into the people, as to produce in them a greater regard to Rome than to their own country.

One part of a Roman agent's business was to prevail on sovereigns to place a confidence in his master, and the use the latter made of it was to enlarge his dominions.

No prince could rely on the fidelity of his people: on any dispute with Rome, she immediately took care to discharge the subjects from their oath of fidelity.

She fomented factions, which publicly maintained in all parts of Europe her supremacy over crowned heads; and this of course, added weight to her influence.

One article in her political system being to keep Europe in an equilibrium of weakness, when any prince made a considerable augmentation of his forces, and his power began to give her umbrage, she used to raise jealousies in other courts, and never desisted till she had set them at variance. This continual discord prevented

vented any particular state from becoming formidable.

Whilst the several states were destroying each other, Rome made use of maxims and arguments, which kept her ever the same, without impairing her power. Her only scope was to secure a sway over the mind, well knowing that, when once the opinion of men is subdued, the conquest is completed.

The other powers of Europe had their distinct point in view ; their plan of dominion tended only to one object. The popes grasped at them all, their system was the government of the universe.

When Europe was involved in wars, and its sovereigns of course had no more forces than they necessarily wanted for their immediate defence, or for annoying an enemy, such troublesome junctures the popes always embraced, in order to make some addition to their power.

They so far infatuated the minds of the people and of the nobility, that every body began really to believe they had an incontestable divine right over all earthly dominions ; and on this principle it was that princes, on many occasions, drew the sword in their cause, and ruined or

impaired their real power in defence of the pope's chimerical pretensions.

If a pope had, by unlucky circumstances, been obliged to come to disadvantageous terms, his successors immediately annulled the treaty; for it is a standing law at Rome, that, in an act detrimental to its power, the popes are always minors: thus what they had lost one time they were sure of recovering another.

Rome, besides those emissaries and agents, had bonzes and petty mandarins swarming in all European countries; and these made it a capital tenet that all secular powers were only branches dependent on the Romish supremacy; a maxim, which, when admitted, must naturally promote a veneration for Rome, and diminish the zeal and fidelity of subjects to their sovereign.

She never was known to make good her engagements, but when some advantage was to be obtained, or, at least, no prejudice could result from her punctuality.

History mentions her negotiating with a prince for the investiture of the kingdom of Naples, when at the same time she had entered into engagements quite opposite.

opposite. She always set up her authority to sale; and the best bidder carried it.

On entering into any obligation, she was sure to insert some clause or subterfuge to avoid the fulfilling of the compact.

LETTER XIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin prime Minister at Peking.

Paris.

THERE is no grandeur in the European governments: what they term the political power of states is next to nothing.

The interest of princes are atoms imperceptibly minute. When I read the narratives of general battles, which have shaken the European world, and of legions of soldiers slaughtering each other to increase the power of their king, it seems to me like a heap of ants making a bustle about an ear of wheat.

The contest for which the greatest battles are fought in Europe, is no more than a few leagues of waste land, which, besides, is seldom of any use to either side;

side; and for such trifles Christian princes spend their lives in negotiating or fighting.

The greatest power in Europe is France, which indeed is nearly equal to one of our provinces, and has as many people as two or three of our cities put together. Its grandeur is extolled, and its strength is talked of with wonder; and all this only because it can raise an army of about as many men, as the detachment which attends our emperor when he goes a hunting.

This monarchy spreads its wings over the Ocean and the Mediterranean; yet instead of being mistress of those two seas, she is insulted on her coasts.

It is a state much distinguished for opulence. Were its stock geometrically distributed, there would be half an ounce of silver for each subject. This is here called finances; an imaginary word, of no import in a general sense, there being only a few farmers of the revenue, who are able to fine to the king.

In France the king is rich, but he is so because every body else is poor. The substance of all his subjects he draws into his own coffers, only asking their leave by way of form.

The

The French idolize their king, and hence the first cause of their wretchedness. It is a family distemper, descending from father to son, and continued from generation to generation. Were they to be asked the reason of such affection, they would be at a loss to give any other answer than that it is a settled custom; not that the French nation is not fond of money, but it is more attached to its customs and manners. Here man is an animal at variance with himself.

The French spare no toil, hardship, or danger to get money, and on the prince's first order, they as chearfully part with it.

The connoisseurs in politics will have it, that this affection for the sovereign constitutes the real power of the monarchy. I should think so too, were it not misapplied: to be the rule of politics, it should fix a point of proportion between the prince and the subjects, that the former might not exact too much, and the latter give too little.

LETTER XV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi at Paris.

Turin.

GAMESTERS are like lovers, they imagine people have nothing to do but to listen to their complaints.

Yesterday I was introduced into an assembly, where, on my entrance, the whole company laid hold of me, and within an hour I was made acquainted with the disasters of every member. One told me that since last year he had lost half his fortune at play; another that he knew not which way to turn himself; a third that cards had stripped him of his all.

“Gentlemen, cried a veteran gamester, you make a great noise about your losses, but I hear not a word of your winnings; for after all, you do win sometimes; but that is never my good fortune. Mind Sir, said he, addressing himself to me, I have played at quadrille ever since I knew my right hand from my left, and thanks to my age, that was before yesterday; and have
“never

“ never once risen a gainer ; I have not
“ been blest with the sight of *spadille*
“ these five and twenty years. There is
“ something very remarkable in my ill
“ luck. If I have a tolerable hand, and
“ call a king, I keep on the board. If I
“ play *sans prendre*, the game is *codille*.
“ What vexes me most is that I play
“ with old women, who are perpetually
“ cheating me; in the mean time I am
“ beggared.”

“ That’s drole enough, said another
“ who sat next to him, to complain of
“ never having *spadille*. Who the de-
“ vil ever saw a black ace at *quadrille*
“ with the Piedmontese ladies ?

“ But, Sir, continued he, what will
“ surprize you, and was never heard of be-
“ fore, is that now, whilst I am speaking
“ to you, I lose *quinola*, tho’ with five
“ cards of the like units. These are strik-
“ ing turns, and what may well be called
“ events.” “ Talk of events ! called out
“ a third, the man is not living who can
“ match me for that ; for instance, here’s
“ one which has happened to me not an
“ hour ago, and never was the like
“ known. To be sure, Sir, said he, you
“ understand *piquet* ?” “ Not I, Sir, I
“ know.

“ know nothing of the game.” “ No matter, continued he, it is so plain a business that any one may comprehend it: it was thus, Sir.

“ A hundred makes the game: I was within two, and my adversary wanted seventy-five. I have the lead: my hand is six clubs, the ace, king, queen, knave, nine, and eight, and three spades, the ace, king, and queen; the ace and the king of hearts, with the queen of diamonds; the very tip top hand at piquet: five cards more to take in. Two being all I wanted, my business was to secure the point. I kept my six clubs and an ace; but observe my ill luck, I take in the eight, knave, and nine of spades; and the queen and knave of hearts; the devil a diamond. I believe that instead of being in the stock, they were sunk into the lowest pit of hell: no, it was not so well, for my antagonist had them all, and displayed seven of them on the table, and among them a quinte to the knave, besides a quatorze of tens, and thus won the hundred louis we were playing for. What say you to that, Sir, continued he?” “ I know nothing

“ nothing of the game, answered I, but
 “ it seems to have been something out
 “ of course.” “ Out of course ! returned
 “ he; after such a fatality a gentleman
 “ may even go and hang himself. In
 “ five cards not to take in a seven of
 “ diamonds.”

“ Sir, interrupted an old lady, tho’
 “ such a reverse be a little vexatious, yet
 “ it is only one game lost ; but what say
 “ you to punting a whole night at Pha-
 “ raoh, and not win one single paroli?
 “ Only hear how it went with me last
 “ night.

“ I first put two ducats on an ace,
 “ which, for the space of two hours, had
 “ been declared against the banker. No
 “ sooner was it on the table than gone.
 “ I seconded it, and lost four times run-
 “ ning. At the second deal I left the
 “ ace and took the king ; the king lost
 “ twice, and the ace won three times ;
 “ still stuck I to the king, and thirteen
 “ times successively I lost. Hereupon
 “ I changed my card, and took the
 “ queen, which had won so often ;
 “ but on my making this choice it lost,
 “ and the king began to be the winning
 “ card. That the queen might not hurt

“ me

me so much as the king had, I changed her for the knave, and the knave lost oftener than the king. However once I won, and doubled my stake on the ten, and lost it *sonica*. The nine had been declared, I took it, and the luck turned. I heard on my right that the banker was dealing the fass; I took it, and was immediately fassed; on my left, I was told the second fass is a sure card; I chose it and was fassed again; at length, I gave over quite mad with vexation, having lost my all, and by a train of events never heard of before."

"A mere trifle! dear madam, answered a Piedmontese, who had not yet opened his mouth; your misfortune is but a younger brother to mine. Within these eighteen years, I have lost in punting at Pharaoh, twenty-five millions of pools; and had I not tricked the bankers, they would have got a hundred millions from me."

LET:

LETTER XVI.

*The same to the Mandarin Minister at
Pekin.*

Paris.

IT is not, at once, that states degenerate; they sink into weakness gradually; their springs are not totally worn out till after a succession of ages.

The second time I was at the mock council of state with which I have already acquainted you, I found the politicians who compose it, taken up with the present situation of France.

Every one delivering his sentiments on this head, one of the members spoke to the following purpose:

“Gentlemen, said he, an usual mistake among us concerning our political affairs is, that we attribute the bad condition they are in to a chain of incidents succeeding each other for some years past; whereas the real cause whence they are derived has existed many ages.

“After the great revolution of our world, when rude people became civilized nations, each particular state
“turned

“ turned its thoughts to its own distinct
 “ grandeur.

“ France aiming at the sovereignty
 “ of Europe minded only to extend its
 “ conquests by land, as if it had not
 “ seen the sea. The Ocean made no
 “ part of its views. The armies it raised
 “ to enlarge its frontiers, and to attack
 “ all who should oppose its aggrandize-
 “ ment, were innumerable. Its plan was
 “ adapted to the execution of its designs,
 “ perhaps to the situation of things at
 “ that time. But the European system
 “ has since undergone a total change.

“ The numerous colonies sent to the
 “ new world have set up a power not
 “ dreamed of before; new plantations
 “ created a wealth, of which formerly
 “ they had no idea; the produce of the
 “ mines in America considerably increas-
 “ ed the signs of value; such a large
 “ foreign trade was opened, as to be-
 “ come the very foundation of the
 “ strength of all states. Ships were then
 “ of greater service than soldiers; and
 “ an army less useful than a fleet. Still
 “ France, not attending to so important a
 “ change, followed its ancient system,
 “ and receded still farther from the
 Vol. II. E “ sea.

“ sea. The disaster of our naval arma-
 “ ments is no new-affair, nor are the de-
 “ fects in them to be imputed to this
 “ reign or the last: it is above two hun-
 “ dred years since the English over-
 “ threw the first foundations of our navy;
 “ and that people has ever been the
 “ more successful, as we have never
 “ opposed their marine improvements.
 “ So far from applying ourselves to
 “ restore the ballance, we have furnish-
 “ ed them with the means of destroy-
 “ ing it. France has seen a great num-
 “ ber of laws, for some time past,
 “ enacted in Great Britain, for the in-
 “ crease of its fleets, yet never have
 “ our ministry thought of following the
 “ example. What has been the conse-
 “ quence? Why, the English navy has,
 “ by its superiority, brought into the
 “ country such an exuberance of riches, as
 “ to supply our enemies with arms against
 “ us: thus the maritime power has giv-
 “ en law to the continental.”

LETTER XVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

NO sooner has a lady in France gained the prince's affections, so as to be taken into public favour, than all things in civil life are called by her name.

On my arrival at Paris my coachman asked me whether I would have a pompadour coach; and a draper in the street of St. Honoré, to gain my custom, told me that if I would be pleased to let him serve me, he would put into my hands a most beautiful pompadour cloth: a cook at the same time, coming to make a tender of his service, told me, as a proof of his abilities, that he could make excellent pompadour ragouts: there are likewise chimnies, looking-glasses, tables, sofas, and chairs of that name.

There are also pompadour beds, and as I can scarce believe, that the French thus give names to things, without any meaning, I shall make some enquiry, whether a pompadour bed be not fixed

ed in such a manner as to give more delight to the senses than any other.

There are shops in this city where they sell pompadour ribbons, pompadour boxes, pompadour fans, cases and tooth picks; every rag on a woman's toilet is now in the pompadour taste.

This nation is said to be vain, but how is this reconcileable to its shew of humility? Both great and small have put on the favourite's livery, and seem to think it a vast honour to be dressed like her lacqueys: the greatest contrast is, that they who pay her the most external regard, affect to despise her the more, in their hearts. Indeed, my dear *Kie-tou-na*, this nation is a mere riddle; all men are inconsistent, but of all men the French are the most so.

LETTER XVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin of the Ceremonies at Peking.

Paris.

HERE they stifle one another with kindness. If you come from the country, or you have been but a week absent,

absent, you must go through the embraces, not only of those with whom you have some connection, but even of such as are scarce known to you.

The like embraces they mutually receive and pay at common visits, on new-year's day, on days of condolence and congratulation, on marriages, christenings, and funerals. This nation is continually hugging, and yet heartily hate one another. I believe the French, who follow their religious tenets literally, derive this custom from the religion of Christ, who, they say, was betrayed by a kiss. Especially the women seem to copy Judas in this courtesy, embracing and ever betraying each other.

Perhaps it may be no more than a social instinct, inclining the French to make a shew of reciprocal affection, that they may bear with one another. These civilities put all on a level; after embracing each other we seem all equals.

LETTER XIX.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin
Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Genoa.

GENOA, from whence I write to you, is not a considerable power, but a city with the title of a republic.

I cannot conceive how the Europeans came to divide themselves into petty territories, which, through the vast disparity of strength, are continually liable to be subdued.

When there happens to be any difference between this republic and foreign princes, the people must rise in support of the rights of the state, a remedy worse than the disease.

A stranger is not long in getting a knowledge of the whole political strength of this government. A few trading vessels make up its navy, and two or three companies of Corsicans constitute its military establishment. Its finances are in a better condition; Genoa has a treasury, and it is on this that the Republic may be said to subsist.

Genoa

Genoa vainly attempts to figure with the principal powers of Europe, receiving and sending ambassadors. It has a sovereign called the Doge ; but certainly his subjects must mistrust him, for on being elected he is made a state-prisoner, not being allowed to stir without the walls of the city. His sovereignty ends at the gates.

This species of sovereignty is renewed every three years. The reigning prince is no sooner seated on his throne, than he must come down and be a subject again.

Antiently this dignity had a crown belonging to it, but it was lost in a revolt, so that now the doge of Genoa is distinguished only by a cap.

The republic's motto is LIBERTAS ; and indeed two or three hundred citizens have the liberty of tyrannizing over all the others ; of making laws at pleasure ; of rescinding them ; of engrossing dignities, ranks, and honours ; of investing themselves with the principal employments of the state, and disposing of the public revenue. It is intolerable to add derision to thralldom. The people in their distresses should not be insulted,

their being slaves rather calls for pity. The motto of *liberty* can suit only a people governed by itself, or its representatives; it is no farther free than as it has a share in the administration, and is a branch of the national council: it is seldom or never that the Europeans call things by their right name. They give the appellation of republic to states absolutely despotical; which is just as much as to say that the Turkish empire is a free government.

Here the supreme authority is lodged in the nobles, who may form pernicious designs against the state, and the body of the people not be able to oppose them. The senate often takes into deliberation matters of a destructive tendency; and, several times within a century, the republic has been on the eve of destruction by their inconsiderate behaviour.

Another subject of public derision at Genoa is the statue of one of their citizens, who freed the republic from a foreign yoke, but in its stead substituted a national one, which is always more grievous.

Besides these public misfortunes relative to the state, there is another which
concerns

concerns the people. The ancient nobility insist on a superiority above the new; hence disputes, heats, and quarrels, in which all families are obliged to take part. It is really too much for a nation to be under the general tyranny of the nobility, without aggravating its sufferings by their private animosities.

A people can scarce bear, for any time, the same yoke, without endeavouring to throw it off. The Genoese have more than once gone about to abolish the despotism of the nobles; but anarchy has always proved too strong for them. Two methods made use of by the state have entirely answered its views: one to impoverish the people by monopolies, and the other to keep them at variance by particular factions.

LETTER XX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Co:ao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

IN China, society is divided into two branches; the men and the women have each their distinct department: they

meet only for the great end of propagation: this is the sole business they have to do with one another. We Asiatics have very little faith in the sex's fidelity; the doctrine of our religion, in this respect, is the use of keys and bolts. Here women are confusedly crowded together with men, and without any other guard of their virtue, than their own conscience.

A husband relies on his wife's chastity, as if she was incorruptible. He leaves in her power the keys of his most valuable treasure, and entirely commits his honour to her discretion. Much may be said for and against this custom; but whatever reasons we Asiatics could, at present, produce in justification of ourselves, we should lose our cause in Europe, the women having gained theirs.

Certain it is, that this separation is no institute of nature, being founded only on the abuses of the free intercourse of the two sexes. It is no more than a remedy enjoined by the legislature against the corruptions of society; and a little reflection on the weakness of one sex, and the libertinism of the other, must convince any one of its propriety, or rather necessity.

It is, say the Europeans, a tyranny : but if this tyranny calms the passions, heals the disquietude of the mind, dispels fears, maintains domestic peace, prevents family contests, promotes friendship and harmony ; hinders the sale or prostitution of justice ; obviates partiality, confusion, and dissensions in the ministry ; preserves the general order, maintains the fundamental laws, promotes the security of the government, prevents the chief employments of the state from being disposed of by favour, the prince from being prepossessed, and employments from being sold ; if these be the effects of tyranny, it will ever be for the happiness and honour of society that men should be tyrants.

You must own, my Chinese friend, said an European to me t'other day, that it is very cruel in you to keep your women under restraint, which borders on slavery. It must be allowed, my European friend said I to him, that it is very inconsiderate in you, to allow yours a liberty, which hinders yourselves from having any. Only cast your eyes around you, and you must see that this liberty, which you so greatly extol, is the very

mage of your slavery. Examine into yourselves thoroughly, and you will find that you have fallen from the prerogatives, which nature had given you over women, and that you are now become only the second class in society.

The sovereignty of the woman is at present fixed and settled from the monarch to the meanest subject. The history of Europe tells us of a people called the Sauromatæ, among whom the civil authority was lodged in the weaker sex: the French are the Sauromatæ of these times. The fair sex have got the public and private government into their hands: all the affairs of the state are under their cognizance. They are the *primum mobile* of the great machine of the European world. Here a woman always lurks behind a man; the Europeans are no more than automata, deriving all their action and motion from females.

What most displeases me in this affair is not so much the intercourse of the two sexes, as the ascendancy assumed by the weaker over the stronger; now this debases men to such a degree, as to make them unworthy of those very women, by whom they are used with such indignity.

L E T-

LETTER XXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

SOCIETY here is self-supported, and no body knows the mechanism of it. The father does not teach the son the duties of a citizen, for he himself knows nothing of the matter.

The laws are contained in large volumes, which they alone are able to read who have spent years in the close study of an abstruse science. To know the obligations of one's station is here a particular profession; few or none are acquainted with the extent of their duties.

A subject who has trespassed against the police is not sensible that he has committed an offence, for which he is answerable to the society he belongs to: the lawyers are to apprize him of it, and then it is generally too late. His sentence follows close on the commission, so that he is often punished for a crime, when did not know he had been guilty.

Sup-

Suppose two individuals have a process: one of them has violated the laws of the society, but they never know of themselves which of the two is in the wrong. They go before a court of justice, where the judges canvass the fact, and after several sittings declare who is in the right.

It is inconvenient to belong to a society where the members are strangers to the duties of their station; and they who depart from them must be instructed by a hireling. This chief of duties makes no part of the general education in Europe. There is no law-catechism; it is only accidentally that a man here learns what a good citizen is to do and avoid. They have heard some body say they are not to kill; that murder and theft are forbidden

Except capital crimes, which are obvious to every one, the laws of Europe may be said generally to punish the innocent; as guilt always supposes a consciousness or knowledge of the crime.

In China the people do not so often depart from their duties, because every body knows them. This instruction is a

part

part of the Chinese education; every member of the empire is taught to be a good citizen; the obligations of each class are specified in the law-books; so that a transgressor is always guilty, as having known his duty before he failed in it. We could wish for the good order and ease of the whole world, that every nation on earth would herein follow the example of the Chinese.

LETTER XXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Cotaoyu se, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE Opera is an immense country; there are people at Paris who have been travelling in it these forty years, and yet do not know all its avenues. I shall here endeavour to send you a geographical, or rather a musico-graphical map of it.

It is not only mortals who appear in this spectacle; but celestial and infernal deities also act their part in it.

Three times a week clouds loaded with gods descend on the theatre, and chariots full of devils rise from under the stage.

The

The former are natives of a country called Olympus, and they come hither to make a shew of themselves to those who are willing to give money for the sight.

This Olympus probably is at no great distance from Paris, for the gods come from it as curiously frizzled and powdered as if they had just left their toilet. As to the devils, they also can have no long journey of it, for the mandarin Christians affirm hell to be directly under the pit of the Opera at Paris. I don't know whether it is because the music is infernal; for as to the devils they are very pretty fellows, and always clean shaved; so that were it not for their horns, they would be taken for friendly beings. Certainly, on Sundays, Tuesdays, and Fridays, heaven and hell must be, as it were, empty; all the gods and demons being then got together at the Opera.

It is on them that the whole of this spectacle depends; it is their province to charm the company with their voice: we see them rule over every thing except colds, their god-ships being sometimes so hoarse, that there is no possibility of hearing them.

The

The Opera has also goddesses, who are the gods wives : these female deities surprize me ; for besides my never having imagined that a woman could be made a deity, I thought all the gods in the world had been old batchelors, and indeed the troubles of wedlock are unsuitable to beings who have the care and direction of the universe. Besides that, marriage always enervates more or less. Accordingly it would pity you to see these gods, they are such puny creatures. Some of them have not six ounces of flesh on all their bones ; besides the thinness of their legs, which throws a shade on their dignity.

These supreme beings are most abominably lewd, hovering about some mortal's petticoats ; for the European gods, like the men, have little kindness for their wives. The poor goddesses are obliged to lie alone, whilst their divine lords and masters are solacing themselves with terrestrial beauties. Formerly these infidelities provoked them excessively, and I have heard terrible instances of their revenge. Some have very nearly set all Europe in a flame : but finding that their resentment was to no purpose, they

they made themselves easy about the perfidious amours of their husbands; and resolved to serve them in kind, admitting handsome mortals to the honour of their embraces, so that at present Olympus is a place of universal debauchery.

The gods never fail of carrying their point with women. Indeed there is no artifice which they do not make use of for that purpose. They assume all kinds of forms, sometimes making their appearance in the attributes of their deity; sometimes like plain mortals. But when bent on succeeding, they change themselves into a shower of gold.

There is in this spectacle a devil of a god; no old baboon is more lecherous, and if he has a design on a girl, he craftily transforms himself into a fine large bird. This god, you see, knows the sex; sometimes he is a heifer, and when his prize gets on his back, away he flies with her.

If these gods are set on carrying off the spouse even of a king or emperor, it is scarce possible to hinder it, for they have always a cloud concealed behind the scenes; thither they run with their lady, and mount the sky in a trice.

The

The devils, who likewise take a fancy to the wives of mortals, carry them off with no less ease. The stage opens, and they descend into their own region with the object of their desires. Here I should rather chuse to be a devil than a god, as there is no fear of falling.

Among the offspring of these deities is a child, the archest wag in nature; there is no trick you can think of which he does not play at the opera, where he always acts his part. Women especially have severely smarted by his pranks. He often insinuates himself into their company like a strayed little boy; at other times he springs up among them like a mushroom; they have not the least mistrust of him, for did you see him, he looks so harmless you would say, butter would not melt in his mouth. It is impossible to forbear fondling him, since he is as beautiful as love himself; and then it is, that he wounds with imperceptible darts: after giving the wound, and seeing that it causes terrible pains, he falls a laughing, and flies away with the utmost rapidity.

I have since asked why the managers of the Opera did not rid themselves of this mis-

mischievous urchin; but, I find, were it not for him, they might put the key under the door.

LETTER XXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Sin ho-ti, at Peking.

Paris.

THERE are in the politics of Europe six important points to be solved; and till they are, this part of the universe will be always a scene of divisions and wars.

The first problem is whether Europe would not be more powerful were it less so; that is, whether it should not be reduced to its primary limits, by separating it from the other large continents where, within two centuries past, it has made such extensive conquests? Asia, Africa, and America have drained it of above twenty millions of its inhabitants; therefore it is weaker than it was; it is not by extending their boundaries, and making large deserts, that nations grow powerful.

The second is a little more knotty, viz. whether the Roman Catholic religion be not an invincible obstacle to the acquisition

tion of strength? or whether the papal power be not a rock on which all the temporal potentates split?

The third is whether population be the soul of political power? This problem would no longer be such, were it not that the word is commonly mistaken; but the public almost always estimates as people what is no more than the image of people. A prince is amazed at being weak with an immense multitude of subjects; but it is for want of observing, that some people are no better than dead carcases. What signifies a king having subjects, if he has not men?

In the fourth, it is asked, whether trade of itself forms a power? Here the point is to know whether, in order to aggrandizement, riches are of more use than soldiers. If the examples of past times could be such to the Europeans, the fourth problem would be immediately decided. The people who formerly overrun all nations prohibited trade; and the political system of Europe is not to be thought so far altered, that what was formerly weakness should be at present strength and stability.

The

The fifth concerns navigation, whether the seas should not be separated from the earth; whether the union of those two elements, be not rather detrimental than advantageous to Europe?

The sixth, which may be considered as the domestic problem of christendom, is of great moment: in cabinets it is accounted the Gordian knot of modern policy. The question is to know whether the degree of power of what is here called the house of Bourbon, be superior to that of the house of Austria? The Europeans have for three centuries past, been cutting one another's throats to clear up this political point; and after the slaughter of ten millions of subjects on both sides, it remains as undecided as ever.

There is one method of solution, and that is a twenty years suspension of arms, in which time geometrical measurements might be taken of these two houses. But this they will, by no means, come into; as thereby the weakness of one of them would be brought to light, and their chief policy is to conceal it. They are under a necessity of disguising their condition to themselves, the better to annoy other

people. These two houses are reciprocally drawing near to an equipoise by weakening each other; so that ever degenerating, they will no longer wage war with mighty armies, but continue to fight, even after their natural strength is exhausted.

LETTER XXIV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

THE Christian religion is very indulgent; besides baptism, whereby souls are purified, and admitted beforehand into the mansion of the blessed, there are other very effectual means for securing a place there.

In this sect heaven is to be gained without much trouble. Here are people who carry you thither at as cheap a rate as possible. These are called directors; they take the care of your soul on themselves, and make it their business. You are to give yourself no manner of concern; but do as they bid you; and their injunctions are so very trifling, that
it

it is not worth while to forfeit eternal happiness.

Nay, they oftentimes strike out a way for you to paradise, by pursuing your pleasures, than which nothing in the world can be more commodious. I shall unfold to you this mystery of the Christian religion.

Among Christians it is not the evil itself constitutes guilt, but only an evil intention: so that it is only doing evil without such an intention, and then there is no crime, and you are safe. For instance, only think within yourself, that you do not mean to offend God, but only to please yourself.

So far a person does not stand in need of a director, and may reach heaven by himself: however, it being impossible but that in sinning there must be some small grain of wickedness, this is what makes a director necessary. He probes the degree of malignity; but as this depends on his manner of applying the probe, it often falls out, that a sinner is more lucky than knowing; and that he is still in the path to heaven, whilst he concluded himself to be above half way to hell.

But

But if the director can save so easily, no less easily can he damn; which makes a sort of compensation in this religion.

Most actions among Christians are ambiguous. They are without effect, till they who have the direction of souls come and give them a determination, that is, a bent towards good or evil. Now this bent is greater or lesser, according to the degree of rapidity given to it. A sinner, sometimes, by one step farther, would sink into hell; sometimes, with the same degree of offence, he will be at a considerable distance from it; that depends on the by ways and windings through which a skilful director can lead his penitent: there is great uncertainty in the acquisition of bliss. A sinner, who is so fortunate as to alight on an easy director, goes to heaven on smooth ground; whereas he who falls into the hands of a morose person, has a very rugged road of it.

What sayest thou of a religion which thus deals in molifications for heaven, and whose superintendants thus either widen or contract the gates of hell at pleasure?

Let physicians and directors be banished from all society, say I, to the end that every man may come under a necessity of curing his own body and improving his soul,

LETTER XXV.

To the same at Pekin.

Paris.

ALL things, terrestrial as well as celestial, act their part at the theatre of Palais-royal. The fixed stars glitter in their orbs; the sun appears in its radiant dress; and the silver moon shines with all its nocturnal attributes. The elements have likewise their place in the exhibition. I have seen a river in vest and breeches, booted and spurred, quite ready to leap into the saddle: the sea also is an actress on this stage, and makes its appearance, as covered with ships: gods and heroes are seen to land on the stage. In spring-tides the ocean comes up so far, as scarce to leave room for the gesticulations of the actors.

The deity, presiding over this element, rises from under the waters like a
 3 duck,

duck, without being wetted in the least. This god usually sings well enough. A great part of his business is to debauch beautiful mortals; when he has seduced them, he hurries them to his ships, which lie ready, and then he hastes away to enjoy them in his watery empire. What pleasure he finds in this is best known to himself, since the fruition of a mortal at the bottom of the sea seems to me none of the most delightful; there is no pursuing him, for if he speaks but a word, the winds are in an uproar, and the seas run mountains high.

It is very often foul weather at the opera; the house grows dark, the sky is all over cloudy, then comes on a rain, with hail and lightning: but the weather soon clears up; for, by the rules of this theatre, the greatest tempest is not to last above five minutes.

Parts are distributed among the actors who are to represent rain, hail, lightning, and thunder; and thus they learn by heart to rain and thunder. A magician, who has all this foul weather in a wand, is to be very punctual in the distribution of it. Should he make it rain but

two seconds beyond the time, it would be as much as his place is worth.

The four seasons of the year are also introduced into the opera, and act their parts : spring and autumn in very showy dresses ; but of all the seasons, summer resides here most constantly, the heat being extremely sultry. As to winter, it is scarce known ; all the cold arises from the actors.

The dawn and broad day are seen there by candle-light, and at midnight the sun shews himself. He parades about the theatre in a splendid car with fiery steeds ; but, it seems, one of his coursers happening once to stumble, this resplendent planet had a fall, which was very near breaking his neck.

You often see a dozen of fat-gutted winds, with their puffed cheeks agitating the air ; but as they all blow at once, it is scarce possible to know how the wind is at the opera.

The zephyrs also are far from being excluded, particularly they are very much approved of by the ladies of quality. I have been told of a zephyr, who by the fragrancy of his breathing, charmed all the women of rank, so that they were
not

not ashamed to court his nearer approaches by languishing looks. A duchess, who, probably, was very hot in the night-time, used frequently to lie with him. For some time he has been lost to the public, and instead of being an opera-hireling, now breathes only for his pleasure, and though, growing in years, he is ever among the ladies.

Besides the actors, gods, goddesses, mortals, elements, planets, devils, and magicians, I may almost say, there is not a single animal, for which some business is not found in the opera. It has lions, tigers, bears, elephants, rhinoceroses, monkies, crocodiles, &c. All these animals have their parts given them in writing, to which they are precisely to conform. A lion which, with one stroke of its paw, could put an end to the stoutest of mortals, must submit to the shame of being overcome by a mere milk-top.

Where the opera has its menagerie I know not; but it must be a very large building, for the theatre is full of beasts. I have been invited beforehand, to be present at a fine concert of frogs, which is said to be composed by the best master of the whole nation: but being inform-

ed, that there is scarce any of those frogs, who is not near five feet high, they shall not have my company ; for frogs of such a size, instead of diverting, must deafen one. The elephants and lions, however, must be very rational creatures, each having in its belly a human soul. To this singing opera is joined another of the dancing kind, where the actors, instead of speaking, express themselves by gambols and antic tricks. Olympus and hell often dance together. In the want of devils furies are employed, and when these fall short, they are supplied by Italians. Almost every scene of the opera concludes with a dance, and after every act comes a ballet.

The dancing tribe worship a deity called *Caper*: an ungrateful deity which, for all the sacrifices, troubles, and labours of its votaries, generally rewards them only with a crutch.

LETTER XXVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

THERE are at present in Europe five great powers at variance. Of these, four fight battles by their generals, and conduct the war in their closets.

L—s goes a hunting when his troops are marching to join his army. F—s betakes himself to his closet when his soldiers are taking the field. G—e sets out for Kensington when his regiments are on their way for Gravesend. E—h gives order for her sledge to be got ready for Moscow, when her armies are preparing for Germany. Frederic is the only one who makes war in person.

This monarch is, by the greater part of the Europeans, accounted a most glorious prince, and that because he has several times staked all he is worth on a card, and often played sweep-stakes: he is the more admired for his composure on a day of battle; and finding leisure for blowing an hour together in a wooden tube, which the Europeans call a flute.

All I shall say about this symphony, which is soon followed by the rattle of the cannon, is that, among friends, I believe there is a great deal of vanity in it; and that if he plays on the flute such a day, it is to be talked of by posterity.

Some, however, affirm, that he is not so rash as he seems: it is said that the present war is the result of the deepest political meditations, and that before unsheathing the sword he had geometrically measured the power of each of his enemies, and minutely calculated their degree of strength and their resources. What is still better, some will have it, that he took a survey of the moral state of Europe, and that seeing only princes without genius, capacity, and experience, given up to their pleasures, and immersed in luxury and softness, he had compared his forces with such weakness. If so, Frederic is a great king; but if a fondness for making a noise in the world be his motive, Frederic is the most imprudent of men.

LETTER XXVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se at Peking.

Paris.

THE beauty of women in France is wound up every morning like a pendulum, as if their charms were clock-work: it is a flower which springs up and dies in a day. The sex's first occupation, on rising, is to repair the depredations committed on yesterday's face. These repairs are made before a counselor, who points out the places most damaged, and guides the hand in refitting them: it is a long-winded business, and runs away with a great part of the morning, before a woman's face is recovered from yesterday's confusion, and every charm arranged in its place. The first dressings of beauty are laid on with the closest privacy; for a woman would be ruined should she be caught in a morning with the face she rose in.

This repair of her charms is performed by ablutions, aspersions, immersions, washings, and rubbings: these operations

ons are only the preparatives to beauty. She proceeds to remove a livid paleness, and to dislodge a fallow complexion; now pomatum is called in for the lips, powder for the teeth; then come the sponges, brushes, pickers; and these are succeeded by waters, essences, perfumes, &c.

Each of these drugs and tools are appropriated to some particular use: for a complexion is to be made, the skin to be whitened, the marks of time to be effaced, the forehead to be smoothed, the eyebrows to be settled, a lustre to be given to the eyes, a fine bloom to the cheeks, a ruddiness to the lips, &c. In a word, the whole face must be taken to pieces, and then made as new as if it had never been worn.

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LETTER XXVIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Genoa.

THE Genoese, instead of speaking, whistle: to converse with them, one had need understand the language of birds.

Every province, every city in Italy, has its idiom, and this idiom is understood by the respective inhabitants; but of all the people whom strangers do not understand, the most unintelligible are the Genoese.

The professors of European languages say, that one day, the Genoese will talk a great deal, having before-hand laid up a large stock of words; for since these two thousand years that they have been muttering, they eat half their words.

Every thing among this people is mean, except their buildings. Amidst the magnificence of their marble structures you see mean individuals buried, as it were, in their abjection; a gloomy

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and dismal appearance spreads itself through all this splendor of palaces. All the inhabitants, men and women, are dressed in black, from head to foot. It is a saying among the Italian wits, that the Genoese are in mourning for their honesty.

The very nobles of this republic have something sneaking in their looks ; and the little silk cloak on their shoulder is so short and narrow, that some have not been wanting to infer from hence, that their minds were too contracted to make great politicians or wise magistrates.

LETTER XXIX.

Sequel of the great Epochs of Europe.

Paris.

I Must make you acquainted with the creation of the new Christian republic.

In the sixteenth and seventeenth century the face of Europe was entirely altered. The people who made most noise in this part of the globe, had sunk of themselves. A general revolution happened on

on the theatre of the Christian world. The nations who were behind the scenes of Europe had taken the place of those who, for a long time, had acted a capital part.

The Normans had not been heard of for a long time. The Saxons and Danes were now become so inconsiderable as to have no farther share in the important affairs of the Christian republic, than by the influence which the great nations were pleased to give it; and these potent nations were such as formerly had made the least figure.

The fortune of the house of Austria was astonishing. Never had any sovereignty on the earth been known to swallow up so many kingdoms; nor a petty power to raise itself in so short a time, and, as it were, from nothing, to the very summit of human grandeur: it may farther be affirmed, that, had not a chain of second causes checked the impetuosity of its ambition, all Europe would have been subject to that family.

France, which, in the opinion of the ancient annalists, had been destined to perpetual abasement, rose still higher. Its kings were formerly so insignificant, that

NO CHINESE SPY.

that it could never have been thought they would be the instruments of its grandeur: this was owing to their having shaken off the servile yoke, under which they had been long held by the mayors of the palace. They had no sooner been informed by their ministers, that the crown gave them a prerogative and power, than they were for making use of it. The work of aggrandizement, however, went on but slowly. Several ages elapsed before the French monarchs could be brought to believe that they could do what they pleased.

The first who formed the plan of rousing the monarchy from its long lethargy, was Francis I. but he rather formed his plan than carried it into execution; and a great matter was it to France that ever he formed it. In my opinion, the elevation which this monarchy since attained to, is owing to that prince. The chief point is the model: the difficulty is to strike out a plan of aggrandizement; when this is once formed, the execution generally follows.

Henry IV. who was called the Great, perhaps because Francis I. had been so, worked on the materials which he found ready

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ready to his hand, and made this monarchy appear in another light.

Lewis XIII. having employed intriguing ministers, put the French power in motion, and Lewis XIV. fixed it. Some, however, say that this prince did it no small hurt; I believe so too: but the first foundations of its greatness were laid, and all the springs of administration had been set a-going. It was not possible for him to demolish a work, which his predecessors and he himself had at first contributed to erect. If he lowered some parts of the throne, he raised others. He considerably increased the dominion of the crown of France by his conquests, or by his usurpations, so as to make this monarchy the first power in Europe, both in extent and number of inhabitants. The house of Austria alone came in competition with its power, and often the balance was on the side of France.

Whilst this monarchy was in motion, that of England was also in action, and the aggrandizement of France put Great Britain on endeavouring at elevation: for these two neighbouring states have ever been rivals, and consequently jealous of each other's power.

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History does not afford one instance of so inconsiderable a nation carrying its fortune to a higher pitch, without going beyond the narrow compass of a small island. I have found out the reason. All other states have neglected themselves, whilst England constantly kept an eye on its interest. It entered into measures, which distinguished it from other nations.

Henry VIII. of England is considered as a prince of little thought; yet he did one very wise thing, namely, the abolishing a class of men, whose only profession was to pray: and thus he restored vigour to his kingdom, which, by the loss of such a number of hands was, as it were, deprived the use of many of its limbs. This step was also of a very happy consequence; it brought into the political state a wealth,* which, when separated from it, cramped its power.

But these were only essays towards greatness; the finishing hand was still wanting. A tyrant* stepped forth, and paved the way to that degree of elevation which it afterwards attained to. It

* Probably he means Cromwell.

is difficult to form an idea of an ambitious individual, bringing his sovereign to the scaffold, and at the same time giving life to his countrymen; with one arm overthrowing the monarchy, and with the other raising the nation: an usurper, who established a power by destroying the constitution. Since this event England has been the third kingdom in Europe.

Russia, which, ever since the creation of the universe, had scarce been known in Europe, rose at once to a considerable influence in the general republic. By one man alone, it emerged from the abject condition in which it had stagnated. Peter, (for so this wonderful man was called) may be said to have created Muscovy. This revolution raised it to be the fourth power; and with a second Peter, it would be the first.

Spain, which for a long time had been buried in a rock, issued out from thence, and settling in its own country, drove away those who had forced it to bury itself under the ruins of the throne. Some European politicians say, that she was in the wrong to rid herself of her enemies; that she ought to have kept them, had it

it been only for population : and perhaps they are in the right, since it is better to reign over foreigners than over desert lands. On the discovery of the new world, this monarchy became enormously rich, and to the very same thing it is owing that, at present, its power is so inconsiderable ; however, it is now reckoned the fifth in the republic of the Christian world.

Holland, which had never been heard of, came into existence, and started up from under the waters : some fugitive people set up a petty republic, which soon proved a match for puissant monarchs. Its birth was owing to fear and despair ; and it may be said to have been formed by the hands of revenge. Tyranny (to which Europe is not a little obliged, because the people in shunning it, have often laid the foundation of the most powerful states) gave it birth : having been persecuted by kings, it detested monarchy : every man of any substance had a share in the government, and this bound every one to it ; but each considered the country as his general family, and the government as the father of each particular household. Toler-

leration in religion promoted population, and the believers of different sects looked on one another as brethren.

This handful of refugees formed the third power of Europe, sometimes the second; and there have been short intervals, when it was the first.

Italy followed at a distance the progression of the new European power; its superstition, ever the same, excluding it from political greatness. Venice and Genoa made a little noise for some centuries; but after several efforts, relapsed into their primitive debility. One royal house alone distinguished itself, so as to take its place among the principal powers; but its degree of force is scarce determinable, as almost always depending on time and circumstances.

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LETTER XXX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin of Arts and Trades at Peking.

Paris.

FRANCE abounds in arts and handicrafts. It is the country of manufactures: the kingdom may be said to be overstocked with stuffs and other productions of their artificers. Every body here is so taken up with form, that matter is not thought of. Night and day they are beating their brains about varying the productions. All this trouble does not proceed from the people, who seldom conceit themselves so ingenious: the origin of it is derived from no less a place than the court, which is seized with this fashionable madness.

Every article of a luxurious tendency is encouraged; and the principal regard is shewn to the trades promotive of pomp and shew. They are so taken up with superfluity, as to have no time to think on what is necessary. This kingdom is really an universal warehouse of manufactures. France has wherewith to cloath

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ten generations; but not to feed one. Artists run away with rewards and honours; whilst toil and trouble are the portion of workmen. There are so many artisans in the town that hands must be scarce in the country; for it is from thence that the whole class of manufacturers must come. Yet the statesmen of this country stir up this emulation, to the very great prejudice of that which should take the lead of all other professions.

LETTER XXXI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi to the Mandarin Kie-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

THE king of France has too many kingdoms. Either the monarchy should be less, or the monarch greater. As he cannot inspect into the concerns of the extremities of his empire, he is under a necessity of substituting petty sovereigns, called governors of provinces. These are properly the French Pachas; only they are more absolute than the Grand Turk himself. Their power is great,

great, beyond all reason and equity. Not but it is subordinate to the king's authority, these governors being only the royal factors; and the people may complain to the throne of their oppressions: but besides complaining to no purpose, it would be the ready way utterly to ruin themselves; for the governor would infallibly take a very severe revenge on all such complaints.

This the people know, and accordingly chuse rather to suffer than murmur.

One would think the king of France had no other subjects than the inhabitants of Paris, and that they who live at a distance from his court are foreigners, about whom he does not give himself any concern.

The other day I was shewn one of these provincial kings, whose realm lies near the sea of Marseilles.

This monarch commands his subjects to be vicious. Any young man inclined to commit the most scandalous debauchery, is furnished with the means even in the royal residence; the king himself seduces and suborns them.

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There is a law in France against all games of chance; and he, instead of watching over the observance of it, is the first to break it. There is public gaming in his house from morning to night.

The city, where he usually resides, is ruined and undone: all the heads of families are under the greatest concern, having no longer any authority over their children. They recommend discretion and frugality to them, but the governor countenances dissipation and prodigality. Great is the power of vice, when authorized by those who should suppress it.

The Roman empire owed its downfall to the tyranny of those who were intrusted with the command of distant provinces; and such will be the fate of France, the governors of provinces abusing the power with which they are entrusted by the king.

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LETTER XXXII.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei to the Mandarin
Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Genoa.

THERE is an animal here of which we Asiatics have no idea, and never was it heard of in Africa or America. In the country language it is called a Cicisbeo.

It is a man without any other business than to be continually dangling after a woman, who does not belong to him; he is to prance about with her from morning to night; he takes the lady at her getting out of bed, and never leaves her till she retires to rest; and this is allowed of by the husband, and authorized by the public.

It would be a tedious business to make you understand the nature of this Cicisbeo: I own it is what I cannot comprehend myself; for that there is a society on earth, where the general depravation is come to such a pitch, that married women shall openly become prostitutes, and husbands as openly disgrace them.

themselves, is what I can, by no means, think. Yet I assure you that there are such creatures as Cicisbeos at Genoa, that wives accept of them, and that they are tolerated by husbands. Nay, it is generally the husbands who nominate to this function, and who present them to their wives the very day after their marriage.

At first, I conceived the Cicisbeos to be eunuchs, but the fecundity of the Genoese ladies proves the contrary, unless this species of eunuchs have a generative privilege. I have even heard that one of the principal qualifications to be a Cicisbeo is virility.

The excuse for this custom is, that the Genoese husbands have such a confidence in their wives as not to suspect them capable of infidelity; but women's morals do not take their turn from men's way of thinking. In all countries the sex is frail; wherever seducements offer, the women easily yield.

It would, surely, in the present state of human frailty, be something very singular, that men and women should be continually together, have all the

means and opportunities of corrupting each other, and yet forbear. The intercourse between the two sexes is a sentimental commerce, and of all sentiments pleasure is the keenest, and that which is least resisted.

Such a licence, I apprehend, must arise from the contempt of women, and the disgust annexed to the connubial state. A husband hears no more of his wife, is not obliged to have an eye to her behaviour, to follow her, attend on her, bear with her freaks, caprices, and extravagances: all this is discharged on the Cicisbeo.

A people must have been very corrupt to adopt such customs.

LETTER XXXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Superintendent of Religion, at Peking.

Paris.

THE Christian religion is so far good, as tending to make those who practise it, just and honest. It teaches that there is a God, creator of heaven and earth, who will reward men according to

to their virtues, and will punish them according to their vices.

What appears to me something contradictory is, that the Supreme Being should have become man to give a right turn to a handful of mud, which he himself had brought into existence; have gone and placed himself in the impure nature of a woman, in order to purify mankind; have consented to make a breach in eternity to begin life; and have terminated this life ignominiously on a gibbet between two robbers. These are humiliations quite contrary to the sublime idea entertained of the Supreme Being, by all the nations in the universe.

But it is not for us mean mortals to penetrate into the secret abysses of the eternal; if such was God's pleasure, it was impossible for it to have been otherwise. I cannot, however, help being concerned that the whole earth was not included in his plan of resurrection. For though the Christians say that the Messiah sent ambassadors to all the nations in the world, to inform them that he had died for their sakes, this seems

to me going a little too far, the gates of the universe not being then thrown open.

We, at least, who have in all ages kept exact records of the great events of heaven and earth, do not find a single word in our archives, that any of these ambassadors of Christ came to China. If any were ever sent, in all likelihood, they died by the way. I would not, however, quarrel with the followers of the Messiah on all these points of their religion, how mystical soever: but what gives me the greatest dislike to them is their opinion, that let all the other nations of the earth do all the good they possibly can, it does not bring them a step nearer to heaven; and that because the Chinese, the Indians, and Japanese, do not believe that Christ ever died, they shall die for ever *.

* The Chinese Spy seems here to make hell an eternal death.

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LETTER XXXIV.

*The same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

IN France genius is sold; here are tradesmen with shops full of wit, which they distribute, in small measures, made in the shape of books; they sell it out by retail to the public, and endeavour to make the most of it: these trades-people are called Booksellers. There is this difference between the dealers in stuffs and the wit-mongers, that the former are acquainted with what they sell, whereas the latter know nothing of their goods.

In this distribution of genius, the Booksellers are so disinterested as to keep none for themselves. Accordingly, in the whole republic, there is not such a set of ignoramuses. The height of their knowledge is the crowding up their memory with title-pages. He who can cram the most in it, is reckoned the best man.

There is another qualification in their trade, but the attainment of it being

something difficult, most of them give themselves little trouble about it. It is to know the names of the authors whose works they have, and to be punctually acquainted with the anniversary of the editions of books which expired at their birth, and of others which, at several times after their death, have been raised to life.

The main point of the profession is catalogues, or a general inventory of their intellectual commodities, so that the buyers may at once see the kinds of genius which they would furnish themselves with, and the expence of their intended acquisition.

With all the natural avidity of Book-sellers in point of gain, they are sometimes exceeding reasonable. Some are so easy as to sell you two pennyworth of astronomy, in a little book called Almanack, and a most convenient composition; for then you have rain and fair weather in your pocket.

The dealers in genius who have the best goods, are so far from having the most custom, that they generally fail, or, at best, die in low circumstances. In this branch of trade, nothing sells but tinsel-wit,

wit, ribaldry and trash; the red, blue and green books, romances, adventures, memoirs and letters.

There is another way, which those, who are in haste for a brilliant fortune, never fail of taking; I mean the sale of obscene books, to the depravation both of taste and manners; as *Portier*, *Therese*, *la Pucelle*, and other profligate and impious pieces. Many Booksellers have felt the sweets of dealing in those articles.

But there is a way still shorter, that of atheistical books: a Bookseller whose shop is noted for writings against the existence of a God, proves, thereby, that he is no atheist himself, and that he believes in a deity, which is money.

These Booksellers are continually at war with authors, utterly despising them as dull and ignorant. Such ingratitude! it is these very dull and ignorant authors who put bread in their mouths. Did only men of learning write, they would starve.

LETTER XXXV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Superintendent of Religion, at Peking.

Paris.

CHRISTIANS believe only in one God, but they adore multitudes of idols. This sect builds no altars to monkeys and crocodiles, but it erects them to images and statues.

Here are some idols held in greater veneration than Christ himself; they are called *saints*, and are made up of the bones of dead bodies, the souls of which, say they, are at present in heaven; they are laid in shrines of gold, silver, marble and porphyry, and placed in splendid niches, over altars shining with every kind of magnificence. There incense is burnt to them in the day, and wax-tapers at night.

These rotten bones must, for the honour of the shrine, have performed some miracles; that is, they must have changed the course of nature. And these miracles are recorded in a register, called the book of lies.

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These sacred carcases are only skin and bones ; and tho' they daily perform miracles, they have never been able to keep two ounces of flesh on their bodies. The greater part are maimed ; one wants an arm, another a leg, a whole body is seldom to be met with. Of some only the head is remaining, or a hand, or finger ; however the veneration is still the same, for in saints, a part is always considered as the whole.

I have been told of a convent of bonzes in a city of this kingdom, which has only a saint's toe-nail, but it is of such reputation, that multitudes of Christians leave the country where there are saints six foot high, to go and worship this toe-nail.

LETTER XXXVI.

To the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

IT is not God who makes the saints, but the Pope. The apotheosis, or canonization, as it is called here, is sold ; a place may be bought in heaven, like an employment on earth ; but an inrolment in the book of canonization runs
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high,

high, so that none, but very ambitious saints, will be at the expence; and if this sum be wanting, the corpse remains a corpse, instead of being promoted to the dignity of a saint; and several, for want of the purchase-money, lose their title to a nich.

There are also demi-saints, who are called *beati*, or blessed; and having given but half the sum, are allowed only to perform half miracles; should they take it into their heads to raise the dead, they would be stopped in their career, as interfering in a thing out of their verge. This police of miracles is absolutely necessary, otherwise the demi-saints would assume to themselves all the honours of heaven, and thus supplant those who had paid the full purchase-money for a complete saintship.

A saint's business is to intercede with God; they are pleading counsellors in heaven.

Besides these idols, which formerly had dwelled in a body, there are some which never had a soul; these are of wood, stone, marble, gold, or silver, according to the wealth and devotion of the place where they were made. All these

these are not productions of the chissel, some owe their existence to the pencil. This difference occasions none in the worship; a piece of painted canvas shall often have more veneration paid to it than a sculptured block of marble. To tell thee how such things came to be dignified with celestial applications, and a rag or the stem of a tree to be made a deity, is a mystery to be accounted for only by Christian Mandarins.

Altars are erected, and even temples dedicated, to copied idols equally as to originals. All of them have not a pagod, but they are all in pagods, where they have their niches, and are venerated according to their miracles; for these stems of trees, and pieces of canvas, likewise deal in miracles. There are some images, which would not yield a jot to the whole body of the most wonder-working saint.

These idols are magnificently lodged, and still ~~better~~ lighted. They would, however, see much clearer in their niches, had not the late King ordered a great number of lamps, which used to burn before their altars all day, to be remov-

ed, saying, that they might be satisfied with the light of the sun as well as he.

LETTER XXXVII.

To the same, at Pekin.

Paris.

THE number of these idols is daily encreasing; surely nothing was ever comparable to the propagation of the idol of the virgin. It is to be presumed, that at the time of Christ's nativity there was only one, and, at present, there are known to be some millions. Christians worship eleven thousand *in the lump*; there are now idols of every nation and climate, brown, fair, and black.

These idols have virtues of all kinds, and perform all kinds of miracles. One would think there was a college of physicians in heaven, where the saints take their degrees; for the Christians apply to them under every distemper. Some implore them to get rid of the gout, others of the fever, others of the gravel, others again beg to be cured of the retention of urine; each has his department, and limits himself to a particular branch of physic. The physicians, whose patients

patients are thus continually decreasing, have often been for suppressing their practice as empirics, who only imposed on the public; and have insisted on their taking a doctor's degree. They seem also to have a profound skill in navigation, at least most of them must have been pilots. A great number of sea-faring people consult them about voyages.

That they are in connection with thieves is not to be questioned; for they are prayed not only to prevent thefts, but even for the recovery of stolen goods.

All these saints have not the same uniform, each of them make a different appearance. Some are stark-naked, others but half cloathed; some in a night-cap; some with crosses and palm-branches, others with swords and sabres; some with gridirons, others with knives; some with bare helmets, others with plumes; some with long beards, others with not a single hair on their chin; some with croziers, others with mitres; some on horseback; some mere dwarfs, and others of a gigantic size, &c.

These idols are placed in the pagods according to their antiquity. The idol
Peter,

Peter takes the hand of the idol of John, and the like of others. Among these are twelve, who are invested with a pre-eminence, and hold their altars by right of antiquity.

Though the class of idols be generally rich, they are not all equally so: this depends on the degree of veneration paid to them; for these deities, like us poor mortals, are not exempt from the caprices of fortune. The altars of some look like so many jewellers shops, whilst at others you see only a parcel of old crutches, and some rusty locks of hair.

LETTER XXXVIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the same,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

AFTER the representative idols come those called relics. These are boxes or shrines containing old rags, formerly part of the saint's apparel. Many a saint has left old cloaths enough to make two or three hundred relics; and would you think that there are not a few Christians among whom these rags are

are of greater weight than all the mysteries of their religion.

The instruments made use of in the sufferings of the person whom the Christians stile their Redeemer, are, especially, an inexhaustible store of relics. To judge by the quantity of the thorns said to have made a part of the mock-crown placed on his head, it must have been of a most enormous size. He is said to have been bound on a cross, and his hands fixed to it with large nails; if so, God incarnate had more hands than arms; above a hundred of these nails being now shewn, and all averred to be genuine. His cross, by a computation I have made, must have been bigger than the three masts of a large ship put together; for the pieces of it remaining among the Christians make above ten thousand relics.

Though every thing in nature perishes; this wood retains its soundness. For these eighteen hundred years past it always looks as if quite new. Indeed to preserve it from rotting, care is taken to change it from time to time; and this is the miracle which constitutes its incorruptibility.

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The sponge (another attribute of this mystery) is extremely swelled, and is become divided into so many little particles, so that all the strength of man could not squeeze them into a middling room.

The three dice (another attribute in that great event) are also multiplied to such a degree, as if the greater part of Christians thought the whole of this mystery to be no more than a game.

Instead of the one lanthorn, which was also one of the instruments of this transaction, they have now several ; but the enemies of this religion give out, that Christians don't see a bit clearer for that : nay, they will have it, that so many lanthorns dim the sight. According to these people, Christ must have had very copious sweats after his death, for they have no less than six consecrated handkerchiefs.

So much for the wretched imbecility of the Europeans. When nations are superstitious to such a degree of folly, this sufficiently accounts for all their other extravagancies.

L E T-

LETTER XXXIX.

*The same, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se,
at Peking.*

Paris.

IN Europe vanity thrusts itself every where ; the aliments are an article of parade, and rottenness itself is converted to luxury. So very vain and arrogant are the people of this country, that the table is become an affair of importance. The French eat from parade, and digest from ostentation.

The luxury of their table is here divided into several services, and instead of one meal they make four. About a month ago I dined with a great man in the city of Paris, who has not the character of one of the most liberal ; however at first came in the soup, with the bouilli and by-dishes ; after feeding heartily on this, the remains were taken away, and succeeded by the ragouts ; this was followed by the third, consisting of roasted meats, particularly all sorts of game. The company was ready to burst with guttling, when in came a fourth

fourth dinner of fricasees, kickshaws and fruits.

To analyze the courses of a French table, I would say that the first is for necessity, the second for superfluity, the third for magnificence, and the fourth for vanity.

A man with only one stomach is obliged to many digestions; he must digest both for fat and lean; his stomach works both for cold and hot, labours for the raw and for the dressed meat; suffers for oil and for vinegar, for the sweet and the sour, for sallads and for creams. What a mish-mash! yet all these things are swallowed down at the same meal.

To this sumptuousness of meats, the French formerly added that of getting drunk; but this branch of magnificence they have turned over to the Germans; so that now all the carousing at Paris is mere bravado.

The vanity of the table can hardly be exceeded. A few days ago I was invited to sup with a rich financier, who has contracted an affectation of delicacy and refined taste, which he carries to great excess.

The

The company having gone through the three meals of the first courses, the master of the feast desiring us to rise, led us into another apartment, where a fourth exhibition stood ready: this was an artificial wood, on a table, with large trees, where fruits of all the seasons offered themselves; and from this forest issued a concert of nightingales.

This same financier has contrived deserts in the way of fireworks, which have been executed with great applause at his evening repasts.

It is thought this luxury will not stick here, but be carried to higher degrees of magnificence.

It is already rumoured, that a nobleman, well skilled in entertainments, intends to give an act of the Italian comedy in fruits; and Harlequin and Scapin are to perform pantomime scenes. Another, still more elegant, proposes to exhibit the whole French opera in a desert; for this I believe would be most proper, since of itself it is very cold. When a government has no sumptuary laws, such national follies are no more than what must be expected.

LET-

LETTER XL.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Genoa.

THE mechanical arts are pretty well understood here, but the liberal scarce known.

Genoa, however, has an academy, but its members are only such, who, from a narrowness of mind, desire nothing more than to be men of learning. The only science in vogue, is that of making one's fortune; and such is the progress of the Genoese in this improvement of the human intellects, that no other European nation can pretend to vye with them in this article.

This is the only knowledge allowed of here. Over this national ignorance preside the bonzes, or monks, and great care they take that the nation shall not see as far as themselves. All would be lost, should the Genoese, active and turbulent as they are, attain to any extent of knowledge.

The government partly coincides with the clergy's views; it is well aware of the danger

danger it would be exposed to, should learning ever diffuse itself among the people. No body is at liberty to print their thoughts, but with the senate's permission; and it is only to those who have little or no genius, that the senate grants this licence. This is the manner by which most of the European governments support themselves. Tyranny chains down the mind in darkness, for, otherwise, it would not fail to throw off the yoke of despotism.

LETTER XLI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Prime Minister, at Pekin.

Paris.

HERE are sixty monied-men, who live in golden palaces. They have made their fortunes by the finances, and are stiled farmers-general.

These leeches hire of the King a permission to tyrannize over his subjects; they have a lease for it, and, in consideration of their lease, annually pay him a hundred millions: it is the constant price.

You

You will readily conceive, that men who have the Prince's full powers, are not very tender of the people; and, really, it would grieve you to see how the latter are treated. The negroes of Africa do not suffer more; but I shall not enter into any detail on this head. They can send the King's subjects to the gallies, and sometimes even put them to death. The Monarch himself furnishes them with all the necessary instruments in arrets. He also barterers part of his authority for their money. It is a constant maxim; the King is paid, and the people squeezed.

Formerly this breed was despised as common dirt, but, at length, people of fashion are come into a familiarity with them; the very principal nobility visit them, and are not ashamed of being seen at their entertainments: indeed it should be so, otherwise the voids in the state would be too considerable; money on one side, nobility on the other, and the public indigence in the middle.

Of all the artifices of monied men, in my opinion, none come up to that of having convinced the government of its inability to do without them. They give for reason, that, at present, they consti-
tute

tute a fund of wealth, where the crown finds an immediate resource on any sudden emergency; but the true meaning of this is, that they are always ready to advance the King any exorbitant impost with which he shall saddle the people, on condition that the capital, with good interest, shall be afterwards repaid them. Now it can be only in states where no attention is paid to the public welfare, that such maxims are established.

LETTER XLII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-se, at Peking.

Paris.

THE favourite slave is so incumbered, that I don't know how she does to bear up under the weight of her labours. There is no giving you a just representation of her life, such is the variety of her distractions. She alone has more business than all the ministers put together; every secretary of state has but one department, whereas she is possessed of all. She takes cognizance of the church, the army, the revenue, and the navy; the public offices are likewise within

within her verge; besides state-affairs, she also has the nomination to posts and employments. On the death of a French cardinal, she must immediately consider who must have the vacant hat. If a disconcerted general resigns, she is to provide a successor. On a vacancy of the post of comptroller-general, she must appoint to it; and when the navy is without a chief minister, she is to nominate to that office.

After these first nominations come the second. If a bishop does not enjoy his health in his diocese, she makes him an archbishop, by way of change of air. If a brigadier is desirous of preferment, and has friends to speak for him, she gives him a command in chief. If a rich individual is for engaging in the revenue, she takes care, for valuable considerations, to provide him with a good branch.

These second denominations are succeeded by the third. It is she who nominates to the royal abbeys and grand priories, bestows regiments and companies, appoints directors of the farms, victualling-contractors, and all the clerks in the kingdom.

This

This is not all; couriers come from foreign courts, on which she must hasten to the King, to see the contents of the dispatches, and give the heads of the answers. In the mean time, ambassadors arrive, and she must know what brings them; others go away, and they must have their audience of leave.

Scarce is this over, when she must take into consideration the promotion of general officers, confer governments, settle pensions, make knights of St. Lewis, appoint to embassies, change secretaries into envoys, draw up credentials, give new orders, remove ministers, exile placemen, and gain over new creatures.

All this, however, belongs only to the great cabinet. The lesser is equally full of business; she must know what the public thinks of the present administration: here the business is to give private audiences, to receive secret advices, to read the letters of pensioned informers, to convey people up the back-stairs, to get intelligence of all the malecontents, to know the great ones who oppose the crown, to come at their schemes, to detect their letters, to take measures for satisfying the malecontents, to stop the

mouths of some by pensions, and gain over others by preferments, to banish the intractable out of the kingdom, and clap up the most dangerous in the Bastile, &c. &c. &c.

So much for public affairs: but besides these, she has her own to mind; to make the most of her station, to raise a great fortune, to accumulate immense sums, to have a treasure, to increase it, to make money of every thing, to take from every body, to amass millions, to improve and multiply them, and to place them out on good security.

Yet all this fatigue is nothing in comparison of what remains; I mean the pains she is at to preserve the monarch's affection. It behoves her to prevent whatever may be productive of new inclinations in the enamoured prince, to keep affairs at a distance from him, to stimulate him to diversions, sometimes to allow him to see other women, provided they be mute, to put him out of conceit with public company, to accustom him to private parties, to divert him, to amuse him, to keep him always gay and merry, to exclude all remorses, to stifle reflections, to take care that the devil
does

does not affright him, to hinder him from giving himself too much up to the black bonzes, to amuse him constantly with diverting tales, to sport, play, laugh, sing, sit up late, send him away pleased, and attend the next morning on purpose to please him again, &c. &c. &c.

Do you think this a cheap purchase of the prince's favours? For my part, were I a woman, I would not undergo the like, to have a boundless ascendant over all the kings in the universe; and were I a king, all the fine women in the world should never have such an ascendant over me.

LETTER XLIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se, at Pekin.

Paris.

I HAVE elsewhere spoken to you of the ladies toilette, but without saying any thing of its advantages.

Though the women here wear no veils, yet one part they carefully conceal, and that is their face. They cover themselves with a white mastich, extremely

H 2

thin,

thin, and over it they lay on a red colour, with the help of a pencil.

These masks are so ingeniously made, as to imitate faces, and strangers continually mistake them. I frankly own I was deceived. The first time I went to the play, had I not been told before, that all those I saw in the boxes were masks, I should have taken them for women. Indeed a little attention sets one to rights, nature being of no such colour.

It is not only at plays and public entertainments that this masquerade is used, it is the common practice in the daily walks, and familiar visits. They wear this mask in the very pagods, for the European women at present stand so much on the incognito, that they would not shew themselves bare-faced, not even to God the Father. The court-ladies are said to have observed this incognito for near an hundred years.

A native of China never sees his wife before the marriage; but here they go farther, they never so much as see her after marriage. Many a husband is there at Paris, who has lain ten years with his wife, and never once beheld her face. A woman willingly allows her husband every

ry kind of possession but the sight of her countenance : perhaps this is no bad contrivance for preserving matrimonial harmony ; so small a matter here will disturb domestic quiet, that the want of an allay of white and red might raise a storm of disgust. This varnished incognito prevents many a divorce between husband and wife ; for the seeing each other would cause a separation. Nothing is easier had at Paris than beauty ; she who has a head need not be at a loss about a pretty face. Every woman keeps her's in a little pot, and it need not fear the injuries of age, the pot being continually recruited. The beauty of the women here is not of the growth of the country ; the lilly complexion comes from Spain, and the rosy from Italy. A duty on the white and red would put an end to its empire.

However convenient it may be for a woman to give herself in the morning, the face most suitable to the part she intends to act all the day, yet I don't know whether the sex in general be gainers by the bargain. Since this daubing came into vogue there has been no rivalry for a superiority, which women used

so passionately to affect : white and red being every where the same, all faces are uniform ; there is an end of all preference, since there is no longer any distinction. The variations are wanting in the scene of beauty ; the face, which represents the soul, has only one decoration ; the passions are mute, and there is an end of all expression of surprise, as well as of the other emotions of the mind.

From this custom of painting, the men derive a great advantage over women, since they may give their tongue any freedom in the company of the ladies, and these shall not turn pale, or shew their resentment by any disorder in their features ; the fibres thro' which this emotion rushes, being totally covered, and unable to act externally. To whatever pitch art be carried, still will it be nature's slave.

The Christian moralists inveigh most furiously against this disguise ; should they succeed so far as to explode it, I question whether men would not pay more adoration to the sex. The European women have already too many advantages over the men ; what would it be, should they display

play all their native charms, and the power of artless beauty?

LETTER XLIV.

Sequel of the great epochas of Europe, and of the court of Rome, to the same, at Peking.

Paris.

IT was a maxim of the Roman republic to terminate every thing by negotiations; and herein she found her account, great regard being usually paid to her wisdom; whereas, had she referred every dispute to the sword, the chance of war must have decided it.

Rome has not been without some martial Popes; but it is not to these that she is the most indebted for her aggrandizement.

After she had got the ascendancy in Europe, and all the other powers were formed, she erected a treasury for fines and confiscations, that is, a new kind of usurpation, for swallowing up the dominions of other princes: after this *she proceeded to lay claim to kingdoms.*

As her ambition had no other bounds than the universe, and her power was

confined within Rome, she often sent commissaries to a great distance, to take cognizance of differences between sovereigns, and, under pretence of settling the affairs of Christianity, she directed those of the political and civil world.

Though she affected an appearance of peace, her adherence to that system was not so strict as to be without exceptions; this depended on circumstances. If war was for her advantage, and the only way to gain her point, she would leave second causes to act; she sowed discord among crowned heads. For centering every thing within her own interested views, and, sacrificing all the world to her grandeur; she gave herself no uneasiness herself about the destruction of mankind.

Sometimes she even began an open war. Christendom once saw her make a descent in an island, which she intended to subdue. God himself set up the standard of this revolt, and the image of Christ, who, according to the tenet of all Christians, came into the world to save the effusion of human blood, was made use of by the Popes to shed it.

Though

Though with scarce any flock of her own, she has almost in all times had a large revenue.

The means by which Rome has several times got into her hands all the wealth of the Christian world, are, 1st, The alms of believers. 2dly, The tribute paid by nations. 3dly, The devotion of the people. 4thly, The sale of indulgences, and reliques. 5thly, The redemption of sins, and the sale of dispensations.

On the death of one of her mandarins, she was found possessed of so immense a treasure, that the riches of many temporal powers put together would have fallen much short of it.

The followers of Christ have in all times contributed to enrich Rome ; not only numberless individuals have bequeathed their whole substance to her, but she has inherited the dominions of many sovereigns.

There is no specifying the taxes which she raised on the several Christian nations, under the name of *Peter's Pence*. She has put all the crowned heads successively under contribution.

It has almost ever been a constant custom in Europe to go and worship God in the city where the Pope resides ; as if the Deity was more immediately present there, than in any other place, and there was such a thing as local devotion. This, to many, was a journey of three or four hundred leagues. They must have thought that paradise was to be obtained by thoroughly tiring one's-self. But the jubilees, another papal institution, were one of its best funds. The number of pilgrims, at some jubilees, has been no less than three hundred thousand ; what then must have been the concourse of other believers ? for those who hunted after indulgences, were only the lackeys of Christian devotion.

The sale of indulgences and reliques has always been a rich mine of gold to this city. Her agents, who were legates at the several courts, after disposing of their wares, have often been caught stealing away to Rome with immense sums.

This revenue was the larger, as what was sold cost nothing : the produce of the trade could not but be very great, the first materials requiring no stock. The
Christians

Christians purchased mere non-entities, and readily parted with their money for a chimera, on which their imagination set a high value.

Rome, at those times, sold the privilege of gratifying one's desires for money. A man might lye with his mother, or ravish his sister. Every sin had its tax, only the greater the more expensive. A peccadillo came lower than that of a heinous crime. The increase of enormities among Christians was for Rome's interest; her coffers were the better filled as Europe became deluged with atheism, bestiality, sodomy, and other debaucheries. The price of beatification was settled; there was a way of getting to heaven, even through a course of wickedness.

Not only past and present sins were redeemable, but even sins to come. A Christian could purchase the absolution of all the villainies of a long life, and looked on himself as a saint, tho' he had millions of crimes to commit. This was a sure fund, men in all times having been fond of sinning safely, without fear of punishment.

A dispensation of age, from vows, from making one's-self a bonze, or from being tied to a monastic life, to lye with a cousin or niece, to marry or be unmarried, proved another source of opulence.

This continual draining of the secular states was the surest support of Rome's over-grown power; it answered her ends three several ways; it diminished the power of princes, keeping the nations low, and disabled the temporal governments from hurting her.

The Popes were no longer necessitous pastors, as in the comencement of Christianity; the case was altered; they were become potent princes, with dominions, revenues, a treasury, army, a court, and figuring in all the courts of Europe by splendid embassies.

The maxims by which Rome carried on her aggrandisement were not temporary and occasional, but a constant and settled plan, from generation to generation. The same measures which had contributed to her greatness, she employed to uphold it.

This power, to which, in those days, even crowned heads paid homage, has
no

no real existence; it subsists only in opinion, and did the European Christians agree in on single point, there would be an end both of the altar and idol. About two centuries ago, two mandarins cut off both her arms; with two more reformers she would no more be heard of.

LETTER XLV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Genoa.

THE Genoese are looked on as the most wicked people in Europe; and certainly it must be so, for all the world has been of this opinion these thirteen hundred years, and it is very seldom that so many nations agree together in a mistake.

This, I am inclined to think, proceeds from the insatiable avidity which this people has ever had for gain. Some governments have enlarged their fortune by œconomy, Genoa has multiplied its wealth by nigardliness.

The source of this passion lies deep; it is derived even from the very constitution. There is a law at Genoa by which

which every one is obliged to preserve his substance, and another to hinder any one from spending it; an admirable regulation for a family, and as improper for a republic, whose wealth consists in circulation. 1st, The Genoese love money; and, 2dly, They worship God. The religion of interest takes the lead of that of Christ.

The great, no less than their inferiors, are zealous for this doctrine. Orthodoxy in the worship of riches is universal; there are no heretics in regard to this article; all ranks profess parsimony, or rather avarice. No dogs are to be kept within Genoa; this government will have no useless mouths, and dogs do not earn money. The republic itself buys and sells. The prince and council are merchants, and often the senate cannot attend the affairs of government, being busy in making up bales, or sending away goods.

Were I to paint the Doge of Venice, in all the pomp of Genoese majesty, he should have a velvet throne, and a damask chair; his audience-room should be a compting-house, and bills of exchange his ordinances. The most solemn

lemn senators are seen in their warehouses buying and selling, and attend their *Banchi* closer than the council of state. What morals there can be amongst this people thou wilt readily conceive; for in a country where the love of gain is the predominant passion, avarice dictates to all other vices.

In a state where every body trades, there can be no probity in commerce; for in such a case, the way is thronged, and they must be turning and winding continually, not to run foul of each other. This produces tricks and artifices, and from these to fraud there is scarce any interval; at least, a nation fond of money easily leaps over this barrier.

LETTER XLVI.

To the Same.

Genoa.

THE part which I am now acting here, is what I am sure thou never wouldst have dreamt of. I, with all my unworthiness, am the very humble Cicisbeo to a Genoese lady; an honour for which I may thank my little Chinese eyes, and my Asiatic appearance.

How

How I attained this honourable post is thus; an old worn out Cicisbeo having caught his death by dancing after a young lady, the husband, with whom I contracted a kind of acquaintance at a coffee-house, pitched on me to fill the vacancy. Being naturally a little jealous, he thought that my odd appearance would not take much with his wife, and consequently he should be more at ease; accordingly he wrote me the following letter :

“ Signor Chinese,

“ We Genoesse husbands are too busy,
“ and our wives have too much spare
“ time to do without company; they
“ must have a gallant, a dog, or a
“ monkey; I therefore apply to you, de-
“ siring you would take on yourself
“ which of these three employments you
“ like best with my wife. Her Cicisbeo
“ has been dead about a week, his place
“ is at your service. My wife is young,
“ and has her share of vivacity, so that
“ I believe you two will do very well
“ together. I shall expect you this af-
“ ternoon, and introduce you to her
“ myself.”

I complied with the invitation, and was immediately installed into the post of Cicisbeo. Thou knowest I am of a swarthy complexion, and low of stature, and withal not very fleshy; I apprehended therefore my appearance would not do, but I perceived the lady liked me well enough. The Europeans have a saying, that a woman had rather have a quarter of a man, than no man at all.

Being an absolute stranger to a Cicisbeo's functions, I desired the husband to give me some instructions, which he did the next day, in the following manner :

DUTIES *of a* CICISBEO.

I.

The Cicisbeo is to be with his lady every morning, precisely at nine o'clock, to serve her in bed with chocolate or coffee.

II.

On coming into her chamber, he must not forget to open the windows, that while he is serving the lady in her bed, he may see what he is about.

If

III.

If the lady asks him for a pin to pin the upper part of her shift, in order to hide her breasts, he is to look for one over all the apartment, and though there may be two or three thousand lying on her toilet, he must be sure not to find one.

IV.

Should her chambermaids not be in the room when she is for leaving her bed, the Cicisbeo, so far from withdrawing, shall help her to dress herself.

V.

At her toilet, he is to stand behind her like a servant, for the more readily handing to her all the several ingredients in the composition of a Genoese face, the white, the red, the patch-box, the pomatum, carefully avoiding any mistake in the utensils of beauty.

VI.

The business of the toilet being gone through, he is to hand her to her chair, and attend her to mass, walking before, or on one side of the chair, like a footman,

man, till near the church, when he is to quicken his pace, and get thither quite out of breath, to be in readiness to present her with holy water.

VII.

In the evening he is to wait on her to the play, and there sit next to her.

VIII.

In winter he is to give the lady her stove, and put it under her coats, &c.

There are many other articles appertaining to the post of Cicisbeo; but these relate to secret services, and the Genoese husbands are to wink at them.

With all thy gravity thou could'st not forbear laughing to see me in the Cicisbean habit of ceremony; I am dressed in black from head to foot, with a little cloak of the same colour hanging at my shoulders, and a peruke big enough to hide half a dozen Chinese faces.

I am, however, not the only foreigner who has been honoured with this illustrious title. The general history of Cicisbeos at Genoa affords many instances
of

of English, French, and Spaniards acting in that office; and not very long since a French general was Cicisbeo to a woman, when the Germans stormed the city.

LETTER XLVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

OF all the governments on earth, surely the worst policed is the republic of letters; it is void of all order and justice: its people, who are called authors, are for the most part arrant banditti, living on theft and rapine; every subject seizes on another's property, and converts it to his use. The Greeks and Romans, who formerly deposited great riches, in the hands of this state, are every day plundered without mercy. These lettered thieves are termed plagiaries, that is, writers whose works belong to others, and who would never have written, had not others written before them.

There is nothing easier at present, in Europe, than *book-making*. Genius has little or no share in it; it is merely a business

finess of memory. To have read a set of ancient and modern books, to retain the anecdotes, the most remarkable passages, and the striking sentences, suffices. The remainder relates to the pen, which arranges the materials, and the author sets up the loom.

A modern European writer can be compared to nothing better than to a gardener, collecting trees from all parts of the world into a piece of ground of some acres, without any merit of his own, but the labour.

A point warmly disputed here is, whether the ancient authors surpass the modern? a question which we should not have heard of, had not the ancient authors existed; since it may be presumed, that the moderns would never have taken pen in hand, had not the ancients shewed them the way; at least, were the works of the former to be stripped of what belongs to the latter, they would make but a very scurvy appearance. They are indebted to them for that very genius, which they shew in the discussion of this question; for, in their proofs, they are for ever quoting those ancients: so that
the

the very reason produced for their deficiency, demonstrates their superiority.

Though books are ever making their appearance in Europe, it is a long time since there has been any writing; authors only repeat from each other; what they say is no more than what has been said over and over.

The form and manner, the drapery of genius, and the giving a new turn to trite thoughts, is now an author's whole business; if he exhibits in a new light what every body knows, he is an original writer.

These are the men who at present set up to be the ornaments of Europe, and who are so inflated with the title of authors, that they look on their fellow creatures only as groveling the mortals, unworthy to breathe the same air with themselves.

LET

LETTER XLVIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Prime Minister, at Peking.

Paris.

IN my opinion, a people had better be without genius, than employ it in broaching pernicious maxims.

About a week ago, I was in company with two statesmen, and the discourse turned on the present broils of Europe : after some remarks on the calamities under which this part of the globe labours, and several very judicious observations tending to prove it beyond all exceptions the most unhappy spot upon the earth, they concluded, that war was a necessary evil. This solution they founded on principles drawn, said they, from the nature of things.

The way these gentlemen took, to prove the indispensable necessity of men's cutting one another's throats, was this :
“ Man, in the state of nature, lives in
“ peace ; but his union with those of his
“ species subjecting him to the laws of
“ subordination, he forfeits that benefit.
“ War begins between man and man ;
“ thence

“ thence follows that between nation
 “ and nation ; in short, it is founded on
 “ society itself.” This they called a se-
 vere law, but barbarous would have suited it much better.

Gentlemen, said I, may I take the liberty of asking you a question or two on this head? How comes it that lions do not devour each other? Why, answered one of them, because lions are beasts, and know nothing of the laws of society. Very well, said I; and, pray, what do you mean by society? Society is the union of man. Excellent! And does this union, replied I, consist in destroying each other? Far from it, added he, the end of this union is their mutual preservation. How then, added I again, can you give such a name to that which has a manifest tendency to destruction?

A Frenchman will never own himself in the wrong; when a breach is made in one of his intrenchments, he immediately slips into another, where he endeavours to defend himself with fresh weapons; accordingly the politician with whom I was engaged urged a second reason, to demonstrate the geometrical necessity of men's slaughtering one another.

The

The body politic, like the human, stands in need of evacuations; without bleeding, now and then, it would be choaked up; were it not for wars, Europe would be so full of people, that its inhabitants would devour one another; besides the earth could not produce sustenance for such infinite multitudes, and famine would do much more mischief than gun-powder. Now, battles and sieges keep things in a due equilibrium, and thus prevent other and much more dismal calamities.

It is amazing that such maxims can come into the human mind, and a system of extermination be advanced from the very fear of it. It is offering an indignation to nature to reduce it to annihilation, as a means to prevent its being annihilated; it is charging the Deity with a physical defect in his work.

Yet is this a current maxim all over Europe, it is espoused at court and in the city; it stands printed in a thousand books, and at present is so much in vogue, that should any European take on himself to oppose it, he would be looked on as a man of a narrow cast, incapable of exalted ideas.

The doctrine of the Christian Confucius may perhaps have contributed to the prevalence of this maxim, for it is religion which gives the turn to nations; and his book is full of wars, not only of men, but even of angels *.

* This is a great mistake; the Christian religion breathes nothing but brotherly love, meekness, and peace.

LETTER XLIX.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same, at
Pekin.*

Paris.

THOSE very statesmen, after deciding war to be a necessary evil, fell to discussing, whether it could be just? That is as much as to ask, whether the passions of princes are equitable? and whether ambition, from which they always proceed, be founded on justice and probity? or otherwise, whether a desire of conquering on all sides be just?

Mankind would never be troubled with wars, were sovereigns and rulers just; as then they would prevent every cause which had the least tendency to disturbance; humanity, pity, and clemency,

mency, which are the chief attributes of justice, would stifle any motive to discord and variance.

If Sovereigns, the usual authors of war, were just, they would know that to diminish nature is offending against its laws; that to destroy the work of the Deity is an affront to himself; that in his sight the blood of one man is more valuable than all the kingdoms of the earth; that there is a law of nations for men, of an authority superior to the interest of kings; and that, to cause millions of people to perish, and generally from a mistake, is an atrocious violation of that respectable law.

I say, it is not only trespassing against nature, the Deity, and the law of nations, but even against humanity, by which alone society can be supported; it is most criminal barbarity to put a country to fire and sword, to massacre multitudes of people, ravage provinces, and lay cities and towns in ashes, for some state-differences, which candour and integrity might always bring to an amicable issue.

If there be scarce any such thing, as an ambitious prince being just, it is of

course morally impossible that wars, being only the consequences of that passion, should be so; for the effect cannot be more lawful than its cause.

Wert thou to read the absurdities of the European lawyers, who maintain in their huge volumes, that there are equitable wars, thou wouldst despise their reasonings, and at the same time pity the people whom they so far impose on, as to make such a maxim a standing law to them. I have read the history of the wars of Europe for these two hundred years past; and not one have I met with which was founded on any tolerable motive.

What justice can be expected from princes who are judges in their own cause, who mind only their personal interests, who are for getting all they can, who prefer the idea of empty glory to the welfare of their people, and who give their reasons from the mouths of their cannon? The iniquity of wars appears no where better than in the manifestos of belligerent sovereigns, accusing each other of breach of faith, and severally appealing to the tribunal of the whole world, against the injustice of their antagonists;

gonists; and, this, perhaps, is the only particular in which the European policy speaks truth.

The Europeans have two kinds of just wars; one for repelling the attacks of an enemy, the other in defence of an ally who is attacked. In the first case, it is only half of the war that can be just; for a prince who first puts another under the necessity of defending himself is a tyrant: nay, the motive of this defensive war, so much insisted on by the European civilians in their public law, may not be so very just, as often the defending party had it in his power to prevent the rupture.

As to the assistance due to an ally, it would be much better to negotiate a peace for him, than wage war in his defence.

LETTER L.

*The Same, to the Mandarin K'ê-tou na,
at Peking.*

Paris.

THE inhabitants of Paris are divided into several little bodies called *cotteries*; each *cotterie* has its peculiar urn and observances, nothing of which

makes a part in the institutes of the rest.

A Parisian belonging to a cotterie of the Marais, on being transplanted into a cotterie of the Fauxbourg de St. Germain, finds himself in a new world, to the manners and customs of which he is an utter stranger. It is as it were to him the Indies of Paris, and it will take him up no little time to adapt himself to the taste and genius of the inhabitants, their principle and usages being quite unknown to him.

Though all these little worlds are within the circuit of Paris walls, in regard to manners, one cotterie is often a thousand leagues distant from another.

The women, amidst all the privileges they enjoy here, have not that of being no strangers in a new cotterie.

I was lately at one of these little meetings in Luxembourg ward, when a lady of St. Dennis's-Street was introduced for the first time.

The company immediately began to take her appearance under examination; from her features they proceeded to her air, her shape and carriage; all her ap-
pur.

purtenances having undergone a strict survey, were declared ridiculous, &c.

On paying her first compliments to the mistress of the house, her expressions raised a general simper. One would think that genius was different in each of these meetings, and that what is wit in one cotterie, is stupidity in another.

It is only the court-ladies who are so privileged as to be strangers no where. When they are pleased to condescend so far as to honour these meetings with their presence, their peremptory accent, and lofty carriage, strike with admiration; no body presumes to controul them in displaying their extravagance and follies, that is, in shining there contrary to all good sense, wit and reason. This is a privilege derived in a right line from the palace of Versailles.

LETTER LI.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same;
at Pekin.*

Paris.

FOrmerly the French used to kill one another in mere wantonness; no man could call his life his own; for a
I 4 look,

look, a gesture, a word, challenges were sent, by which two or more persons consented to meet at a place appointed, and do the best to cut each others throats.

This people did not, at that time, stand in need of any foreign wars to thin them; the intestine folly answered their purpose. It was nothing uncommon to hear, as it were, pitched battles of duellists, in which most of the combatants fell on the spot.

It is now about a century since one of their Kings put an end to this abuse. He published an edict prohibiting his subjects from killing one another: but that edict has since given rise to many perplexities; for now a gentleman disgraces himself, if he conforms to the law; and should he infringe it, he is punished.

He who makes the royal ordinance his rule, is accounted a scoundrel; no man of reputation will keep him company; and he who violates that salutary law, is indicted as a disturber of the public peace, is punished, his fortune is confiscated, and not seldom does his life pay for his temerity, as a noxious member of society.

This

This proceeds from the opposition between private opinions in Europe, and the general system; and from every one's laying down to himself such a rule of conduct as most suits his humour.

In China, the first duty is to obey the laws. I don't know of any one particular case in which a person would disgrace himself, by the most punctual obedience to the orders of his sovereign.

LETTER LII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Peking.*

Paris.

THOU desirest to know the methods made use of by the western people in the acquisition of learning, and this I shall inform thee of; there is nothing easier. This is the process; the whole European genius is contained in large libraries, consisting, perhaps, of millions of books; these books are the reservoir, or store-house, of understanding, from whence every European takes what he stands in need of, in order to have wit.

To avoid confusion in the sciences, each class of scholars has its division, where its authors stand with their names:

I 5

beyond

beyond this precinct he must not go, as he would find himself in a foreign country, and not so much as know the name of the inhabitants.

All the labour consists in the research. They go on poring over these books for a long time, and often during their whole life, without finding the genius sought for. They, whose good fortune it is to light on it, are the elect in science; and this is what makes all the difference between the learned and the ignorant.

Though they have been labouring hard at the library of sciences for above twenty centuries, I am assured that learning is still *in statu quo*, and that the European genius has not gained an inch of ground for these two thousand years past. I readily believe it, for nothing is put into the store-house of genius but what has been taken from it; nay, it is affirmed that less is put in than is taken out; if so, the library of the sciences must be a hindrance to the perfecting them, and thus the assiduous reader would at length come to know nothing.

They are ever dressing up the thoughts of the ancients in a modern taste; but when all the modes of wit shall be exhausted,

hausted, only the primary elements of science will remain, and these being destitute of new turns, will relapse into their original non-entity.

Men in general are not adapted to the sciences; limited beings cannot travel over that which is unlimited: but of all the individuals on the face of the earth, perhaps the Europeans are the least qualified for literary attainments.

These people give themselves up to a great many false notions, from which other nations are free. They have too much fire, too much wit and vivacity. They are too great lovers of company, and this very thing is one great impediment to learning. The continual round of entertainments, diversions, and whims, infects the mind with a levity and giddiness, incompatible with the improvement of arts and sciences. The European genius should be, as it were, new cast, in order to give it that solidity and steadiness necessary in the acquisition of real knowledge. Perhaps some change should also be made in its climate, which has too great an influence on its genius; the more closely we examine the terra-queous globe, the less aptitude do we

find in it for the scientific attainments.

America is naturally without genius, Africa has no talents, Asia is not sufficiently communicative, and the Europeans run into the other extreme.

LETTER LIII.

*The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Same,
at Peking.*

Paris.

THE subjects here are at so great a distance from the prince, as to be quite out of his hearing. The complaints of aggrieved innocence seldom reach above half-way to the throne, being lost in the public lamentations: the monarch knows nothing of the private iniquities committed in the administration.

A few mornings ago, a man of no bad appearance knocked at my door, begging some relief: he told me that he was a subject of the King of France; I take the liberty, added he, to put into your hands a memorial, on a notorious injustice done me by a law-court of this kingdom, affecting me both in my honour and person. Who may you be, Sir, said I? I am, answered he, an unfortunate person, just escaped

escaped from the gallies. Has that always been your condition? Far from it, said he, it is but lately that I was a magistrate of Strasburg, in the province of Alsace; besides, I had a considerable post in the revenue, but by the villainy of corrupt judges I have been sent to the gallies. If you can prove that any wrong has been done you, said I, it will be an easy matter to have redress; the King is too good to suffer any of his subjects to be injured in such a manner. What signifies all his goodness, replied he, when most of his officers are villains? Make a clamour, said I, against such a horrid grievance; go about in all public places. That's what I can't do, said he, I am obliged to keep myself concealed, for my sentence, though unjust and cruel, is still in force. Were I to be known, I should be hurried back to the gallies, if not hanged; besides, few care to see me, and nobody will stir in my behalf. I have been publicly whipped and branded by the executioner, and condemned for life to the miseries of a galley, which is, Sir, the punishment here for the vilest malefactors. And have not you petitioned the King? I have sent several petitions,

titions, added he, but none ever came to his hand; for my enemies, after using me so infamously, have taken care to debar me from any access to the sovereign, so that I have been obliged to print memorials; in the mean time I am forlorn, destitute, and crushed with affliction and misery. In this memorial, continued he, you will find a full account of the horrid wrongs done to me, and likewise of the villain who prevailed on the judges to condemn me to punishments which his own exactions had deserved.

In this piece, which I perused, it appears that the city of Strasburg was governed by a royal magistrate called Pretor, who committed all kinds of oppressions on the people of that province; the author of the memorial always opposed him with a patriotic ardour; so that the Pretor, incensed at this honest man's boldness, determined to ruin him; to this purpose he corrupted the judges, who sentenced him in the manner he complains of in a public writing.

LETTER LIV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Milan.

MILAN*, where I have been for some time, is a city remarkable for pomp and magnificence: but its luxury, as in France, is a consequence of the public indigence. There are people here with two coaches, and not one pair of shoes; nothing comes nearer a Parisian suburb, than the city of Milan. There is even some affinity in the manners and deportment of the people, so that were it not for their jealousy and superstition, the Milanese would be taken for Frenchmen; but an Italian nation cannot hide its weakness, there is always something which detects it.

Formerly Milan had its Duke, who was an independent sovereign; but, at present, the country is under a foreign power, continually draining it by taxes, which are lost to it, being remit-

* The Chinese Spy is not regular in his travels through Italy.

ted abroad. Vienna, which is the exacting power, hires a governor to represent it, and this Governor is sovereign of an Italian state. I believe that Europe is the only part of the world, where reigning sovereigns demean themselves so as to quit their throne, and become the hirelings of a foreign prince.

LETTER LV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

ITold you in one of my former letters, that the wars of Europe are owing to an effusion of bile, or a dry acrid and adust blood in sovereigns. I am not singular in this thought; an European politician is so far persuaded of it, that he has lately published a scheme for a general pacification on these principles, containing the methods for terminating the differences of the potentates now at war. I herewith send it thee, and thou wilt see it is not unlike a physician's prescription.

PLAN

PLAN of PEACE

Between the belligerent powers of Europe.

PRELIMINARIES.

A R T. I.

The European sovereigns now at war shall be under a particular regimen for a fortnight, during which time nobody is to mention the words bomb, bullet, ball, cannon, in their presence.

A R T. II.

They shall forget their variances, and, especially, let it not come into their heads that they have armies.

A R T. III.

Every morning, at their rising, let a chapter of morality be read to them, on the happiness of a quiet life, and the contempt of grandeur and riches.

A R T. IV.

Political medicaments and decoctions for attaining a general peace.

A R T.

A R T. V.

The King of Prussia is to use the home-baths a fortnight without intermission, taking care that the water be not too hot ; he is to continue in the bath three whole hours, without directly or indirectly inquiring about his army, and without reading dispatches from his camp, or any other inflammatory packets ; he may, however, play on the flute, read Voltaire's works, and make verses on *Sans Souci*. In case that after a week his temperament continue the same, and his imagination be taken up as before, with sieges and battles, he is immediately to betake himself to the cold river baths.

A R T. VI.

The Queen of Hungary shall, for the space of a fortnight, every evening, take a sleepy draught, with some grains of opium in it, that it may the more effectually lay her in such a sound sleep, as to lose all remembrance of Silesia.

A R T. VII.

The King of France shall, every evening

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evening, for the space of a month, on his going to bed, take a julip of poppies, which, by being somniferous in the highest degree, will cause him to forget the disgraces of his flag, and the loss of Canada. This will also compose his senses, and dispose him to lend an ear to pacific overtures.

A R T. VIII.

George II. shall be administered two ounces of barley meal, with a like quantity of hartshorn and bruised snails, as a lenitive, which will make him easy about H——, and, by suspending his resolutions, will prevent his being over hasty for saving a territory of no use to England.

A R T. IX.

The Empress of Russia shall cool her blood with an emulsion of the four cold seeds, which will hinder her, for the future, from being so hot about the affairs of Germany, with which she has nothing to do.

LET.

LETTER LVI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Peking.*

Paris.

HERE are tribunals of wit and genius, called academies, the judges of which are profoundly read in all sciences.

Each academy has its precinct, within which it is to keep, and not invade the departments of another.

The grandees, though without any tincture of letters, are, however, admitted into the societies, and as honorary academicians; a title I do not understand, and which is even a ridicule on its meaning, nothing being more disgraceful to a literary society than the company of the illiterate.

These academies are not useless, for the improvement of knowledge, and the enlargement of the human understanding; they propose, from time to time, very abstruse questions; for instance, *Whether the Chinese are men? Whether the Indians have a sensitive soul? or, Whether there be any difference between an American and a brute?*

brute? and they who give the best solution of these useful problems, are presented with a golden image. There must certainly be some magic in this image, for thou canst not imagine the emulation it stirs up in all the members of the academies, so that some have been found half-dead in their studies with labouring to obtain one of these baubles.

Amongst the great number of these literary tribunals, I shall only mention four, *the academy of words, the academy of faces, the academy of writings, the academy of songs.* The business of that of words, or the French academy, is the arrangement of terms. It was probably instituted lest the nation should become dumb; but of all the several institutions in this monarchy, I know of none more useless; there never having been any danger of the French losing their speech.

It was apprehended some time ago, that the academicians themselves would become dumb, for it had placed its whole learning and knowledge in a huge book called a dictionary: but, by a particular contrivance, it has effectually removed all such apprehension, being continually employed in taking from that
vocabulary,

vocabulary, the words it had deposited there ; and with them it composes academical speeches, so that the celebrated body will have wherewith to speak, till words and voice shall be no more.

The academy of faces, or painting, can do without wit, or so much as genius ; its capacity lies at the end of a pencil ; all its business is to transmit to posterity likenesses and attitudes. Its books are on canvass, and its libraries are made up of pictures, in which the academicians brighten their fancy, though generally against all common sense.

The academy of writings, or the belles-lettres, does not talk so much as that of words, but with the affectation of thinking more. It is allowed to take a view of most sciences, and at the same time is not obliged to enter into laborious investigations. It is a papilio which flutters about the sciences, but only skims the surface of them.

The academy of songs applies itself wholly to the modulation of a tune, articulating quavers, figures, and the arrangement of little black spots among lines. Its principal care is to make a noise ;

noise ; the greater the clatter, the more honour to the academicians.

LETTER LVII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Prime Minister, at Pekin.

Paris.

THERE is not in all France a more troublesome calling than that of a minister of state ; it would grieve thee to see these poor creatures : their business puts them continually out of breath ; they are always puffing and blowing, and at the same time they grow quite swelled. Their labours cease not with the day, the night is no season of rest to them ; and as they forget themselves, as little are they mindful of others ; indeed, did not women and diversions bring them back into company, they would be altogether invisible.

Tho' these laborious men are within one step of getting into the best branch of government, they take along circuit which does not lead to it ; such is the penetration of these vast geniuses, that they see the advantages of the monarchy where
they

they are not, and see nothing where they really are.

France contains a hundred and fifty millions of square miles, which, well cultivated, will yield subsistence for twenty-five millions of inhabitants; its bare products will supply it with a sufficiency of the first materials for carrying on the most extensive trade in Europe, and giving it a maritime force superior to that of all the other states put together.

Four plain and easy systems would make this monarchy the most flourishing in the universe; these are, agriculture, navigation, commerce, and shipping; but they are not even thought of: these four so important branches of government are totally neglected, while others of little or no consequence are pursued with all possible eagerness. The King of France's ministers seem to have laid a wager who should weaken the kingdom most; and so effectual have the measures been for that purpose, that the vast body is fallen into a decay; the state is now only skin and bone, and its ghastliness is frightful.

These

These ministers are stiled *excellencies*; very excellent men they truly are for protracting business, and letting the government die of a consumption.

Wert thou acquainted with the occupations of their excellencies, thou wouldst think their view in holding their places was, not to discharge them. One great affair takes up all their thoughts, and in their sleep they dream of it; namely, to raise money. This is their main qualification. In their closets is a little medal called *Louis-d'or*, on which turn all their speculations. This is a Secretary of State's philosopher's stone. When they have squeezed from the people an infinite number of these medals, the great work is compleated.

Do not imagine that these ministers are deficient in watchfulness; the world has not men of more activity; they have not their equals for receiving memorials, or reading petitions. They are especially inimitable in what is called dispatches; it is a pity that these dispatches are not expeditious, for a minister, after ten years dispatching, has done nothing. They are buried up to the chin in papers, and their life wears away in making up rolls;

this it seems is such a task, that they have no time to give an eye to the state, which is running to ruin through the multiplicity of their writings, for amidst the hurry only of their correspondences, they cannot but lose sight of the monarchy. There is not one of these ministers who does not write or dictate eight or ten thousand letters every year, and three-fourths of this trouble might be saved, were they not so excessively fond of details, and insignificant trifles. It is the whole employment of about twenty clerks, day and night, to copy papers of no consequence; and these secondary ministers shall take up more pages in entering into proofs of some private concern, than we, in China, for the general affairs of the empire. Then they must hear and know every thing; the very branch of secret conferences, to be informed of what the world says of them and their administration, is sufficient to employ their whole time. Another, and no inconsiderable part of their ministry, is the giving public audiences. Didst thou but see how big they look at coming out of the audience-room, where they have heard much and spoke little,

thou

thou wouldst surely think those men to be the most useful in the whole monarchy.

LETTER LVIII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

SPAIN has an inquisition for those who do not believe in Christ, the Pope, and the church; and in France there is one for those who do not believe in the ministry, or in the sovereign's mistresses and favourites.

It is here expressly commanded not to speak on subjects on which it is impossible to be silent, I mean the bad management of affairs, of which every individual feels the effects. A prince might as well publish an edict, that his subjects, when sick, shall not complain of the pains they endure.

To the inquisition of the French government belongs a great number of spies, called familiars, who, every morning, repair to their posts, that is, the public walks, the gardens, and coffee-houses. The Spanish familiars are paid for listening, the French for promoting talk.

talk. They draw you in to speak of state-affairs, or the favourites of the prince; and if any heterodox notions escape you concerning either, you are laid by the heels. It is very hard that a man should suffer for a few words spoke at random; and much more to be punished for an inarticulate motion.

One of these familiars was lately in a coffee-house, launching out in praise of a certain court lady, whom all the world knows. A knight of the military order of St. Lewis, who had spent six months in the Bastille for having spoke, and ever since has been dumb, lifted up his eyes to heaven, at a certain particular of the panegyric, as expressing his admiration of the fine things he heard; the next day he was taken up. Among the Moors in Africa the body is only in slavery, whereas, in France, the mind itself is held captive.

This inquisition allows of lying, but forbids speaking truth. For instance, one may say of a minister who is ruining every thing, that he fills his post with great honour and capacity; and that a certain lady, who is stripping the nation, enriches it: but he that should say, that
the

the one knows nothing of government, and that the other knows her own interest, would severely smart for his frankness. These are truths which are never forgiven. The doctrine of the court differs herein from that of religion; the more virtuous a person is, the more criminal he is in the eye of this inquisition. State calumny it readily overlooks; but against detraction it is inexorable.

High treason, with which they are only properly chargeable who attack the prince in person, is here wrested to every case. A subject, who has never so much as seen the King in his whole life, and who, so far from plotting against him, would shed the last drop of blood in his defence, is often imprisoned for high treason.

Though this be, at present, the fashionable crime in France, it may be affirmed, that there is no state in Europe where it is less known. Nobody is so much concerned for the public distresses, as to call him to account from whom they might be suspected to proceed. This trespass relates only to the placemen or favourites. High treason is not for having offended the throne; this nobody

thinks of; the treason lies in having given offence to those who are near the sovereign.

A minister who governed France under Lewis XIII. is said to have proved demonstratively, that to revile the minister is a direct attack on the King; which is just as much as to say, that an offence done to a footman is the same as if it had been offered to his master. I suppose it is ever since that time there have been so many taken up for high treason; for the monarch having always a swarm of ministers and favourites, delinquents must of course be very numerous. There is a little man here, a kind of officiating secretary of state, who signs letters *de cachet*

I observed, in perusing the universal history of Europe and its governments, that the more a prince gives himself up to sensuality and diversion, the greater number of subjects are committed to prison. At this present writing the goals of this kingdom swarm with state-prisoners; all places of security are crowded with them, so that the government is at a loss where to stow any more. The state
abounds

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abounds more with prisoners than with soldiers.

They talk of a prison of such an amplitude, as occasionally to contain half the French nation; but till this doleful edifice shall be erected, there is one way for the inquisition not to lose any of its fees, which would be to make gates to Paris, and then shut them, thus confining all the inhabitants as state-prisoners.

LETTER LIX.

The Same, to the Mandarin Superintendent of Religion, at Paris.

Paris.

THERE is in France a society of black bonzes, who make three vows, a vow of dissimulation, a vow of riches, and a vow of acquisition; all from a contempt of the world, from Christian love, and for the greater glory of God: and so exact are they in the observation of these vows, that they are never known to break them.

Besides these three vows, they have a fourth, which in a great measure is the

foundation of the others, I mean the vow of commerce, which they have professed so successfully, as to become the principal traders in the universe. Indeed they follow the example which the most famous merchants have set them, becoming bankrupts now and then, in order to enrich themselves the sooner.

Already their wealth is such as would amaze thee; another hundred millions, and they would be able to purchase the kingdom, of which they have this long time been making a sale. The riches of the house of Bourbon, the reigning family, cannot come in competition with this self-denying society.

Besides their traffic to Africa, Asia, Europe, and America, they are likewise physicians, surgeons, and apothecaries. They sell physic of all kinds; drops, powders, essences, spirits, and pills for the most scandalous diseases.

Sometime ago they had a violent dispute with other bonzes and mandarins concerning predestination; but herein they did not see that they were predestinated to be driven out of France; and this is now going to be the case.

LET.

LETTER LX.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

THERE is no manner of uniformity in European society: the ways of life and professions are so opposite, that men differ from one another, as darkness from light.

I lately went to see a little society of bonzes, called Carthusians. These monks, on their coming into the convent, leave their tongue at the door. They make a vow never to speak. The word *woman* they are not allowed to utter, and that of propagation is likewise forbidden. They sing all day, and pray all night. Their discipline is to forget earthly things, that they may closely attend to those of heaven. Their life is one continual meditation on the contempt of sublunary enjoyments. Their waking thoughts are to be employed about the Deity, and they are to dream of him whilst they sleep.

How different this life, from that of the other subjects breathing the

same air, and educated under the same laws: the generality of these seem to have made a vow of never being silent; they are strangers to the very word. If not their law, their custom is never to think on the things of heaven, but give themselves up wholly to those of the world. Their life is one continual round of frivolous amusements, which employ their thoughts by day, and their dreams by night.

And it is not only in these two conditions that the difference lies, there is the like contrariety almost in every class.

You find here people who are continually at work, others again who are totally idle; some in a perpetual motion, and others in one continual inactivity; some are eternally talking, some ever writing; the former walk about from morning till night, the latter never stir from their chair; some again are ever with women, and others shun their company, &c. &c.

This picture is but a slight sketch of the perpetual contrast observed here; the reason of it does not lie deep; it is owing to the want of uniformity in the political and civil government.

LET.

LETTER LXI.

*The Same, to the Mandariu Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

VOLUPTUOUSNESS has not infected every class of society.

Paris is not without some modest women; but they are so ugly that they are as it were obliged to be virtuous.

The chevalier who sets up for skill in physiognomy, discerns female virtue in the features. On seeing a woman with only one eye, or some blemish in her looks, he immediately says, That's a woman of honour; and though he owns this rule not to be infallible, it seems he has very seldom found himself mistaken.

The small-pox has here such an influence on the temper of women, that a young lady who had a keen relish of gallantry, on the loss of her beauty by this distemper, betook herself to an exemplary virtue.

A person of eminence had struck out a scheme of Christian morality, which tended to disfigure the sex, in order for

their more surely going to heaven; but it did not take place: very probably the women opposed it, chusing rather to run the risque of their virtue, than to spoil their beauty.

Besides virtue in deformity, there is also superannuated discretion; whatever turn a woman might formerly have had for love, on her drawing near to forty, and reading in the looks of men, that virtue would become her, she immediately models herself accordingly.

But there is one thing in this superannuated virtue which I cannot endure. They who are possessed of it, are continually talking of it, and making comparisons of their morals, with the dissolute part of their sex. They seem to forget that all the difference lies in ten or fifteen years.

However innumerable are the exceptions to this rule, some women here have as little self government in their advanced age, as in the fire and impetuosity of youth, and these women at Paris are pointed at, and treated with the utmost contempt.

LET-

LETTER LXII.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin
Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.*

Milan.

THIS is the country of processions, images, festivals and burials; but, in magnificence, the opera beats all religious ceremonies. Most of the nobility have their theatrical house, which they call a box, where they live, eat, play and drink; at least I have seen many a one napping there: indeed it is highly entertaining, and the pleasure makes it very well worth while to have a habitation so near the stage. Here, as at Turin, two or three *Castrati* stalk on the stage, effeminately trilling forth their amorous sufferings. But it is not music alone which brings many to these places of resort. Both sexes have a greater concern to carry on there. They are so very commodious, that I am assured the homage of love has been paid there personally, and that the original of operas is performed in these boxes.

The ladies of Milan are very gallant, and not the most cautious in their intrigues.

trigues. This they call the French way of life; they might as well call it the Turkish way: in libertinism they go beyond the women at Paris; as, in copying, the sex in Italy always surpasses its originals.

The carnival, that season of phrenzy, is limited in all European nations. At Milan the reveling lasts four days longer. This perhaps, thou wilt say, is only a trifle; but let me tell thee it is a matter of weight in regard to the general morality; crowds of people resorting hither from all the cities in Italy, for the sake of enjoying this licentiousness the longer. Whilst in this season the Christian Mandarins in other states are exhorting the faithful, not to forget *that they are but dust*; those of Milan, by plunging themselves in diversions and pleasures, remember only that they are men.

LET.

LETTER LXIII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

T'Other day I was reading an epistle in the beginning of a book lately printed, and dedicated to an European monarch: it was so stuffed with such fulsome praises, and such extravagant expressions, that I make no doubt but this monarch, with all the flattery he is used to, must himself have blushed at reading them. All his vices are there changed into virtues, and his weaknesses converted into magnanimous qualities. Such an epistle is sufficient to disfigure the whole body of modern annals. Two centuries hence, the historians will be quite at a loss to reconcile the disorders of this prince's reign, and the mischiefs they have occasioned to Europe, with these supposed virtues and amiable qualities.

When nothing good can be said of a sovereign, why do they take any notice of him?

Where.

Wherefore do they impose thus on posterity by praises, to which the times when they were written will give the lie? Hence arise those perpetual contradictions in the history of Europe. The same prince whom one author treats with contempt on account of his vices, shall in another be set off with so many virtues as not to be distinguishable.

It is still a question in Europe, whether Lewis, whom some authors dignify with the name of *Great*, was not in effect as little as he has been represented by o her pens.

This inconveniency is not known in China; there historical truth is never disguised. The Mandarins appointed to write the annals of Europe, are allowed to set down the facts in the naked truth.

Methinks I am within the sanctuary of truth, and live in the freest country on earth, when I read these words in the Pekin journal. "The Emperor lately
 " committed an action beneath his rank;
 " the day following he was in such a
 " passion as not to know himself: or on
 " such an occasion he omitted doing justice;
 " on another, when it was expected
 " he

“ he would have shewn clemency, he
 “ carried his resentment to the utmost
 “ severity, &c. &c.”

An author here would be irretrievably lost, should he take it into his head thus to publish the plain truth. Accordingly no stress can be laid on the annals of this part of the globe: the history of Europe is but a heap of fables and artful disguises.

LETTER LXIV.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Catao-yu-se,
 at Peking.*

Paris.

I Have spoken to thee of the plays at Paris, but without saying any thing of theatres, which are of great antiquity; for those institutions which render the Europeans so depraved, are not their own invention, but of very antient origin.

The Greeks and Romans, after corrupting all nations, established customs for corrupting themselves: yet is the theatre said to have been the temple of morality, the school of wisdom, whereby the people learning to depart from
 vice,

vice, by the exhibitions of its bad consequences, improved in virtue; but this school, if ever it was a school, has greatly degenerated: it is, at present, a scene of prophaneness: one step farther, and it will become a place of public prostitution.

The revolutions of the universe having buried both the dramas and *dramatis personæ* under the same ruins, there was an end of plays; and the only scene in the world was the world itself. The different nations however, on becoming policed a new, were for reviving the ages of literature, and this they imagined could not be done without acting plays.

France opened its theatre with celestial pieces; the characters were God and the saints; the prophets, the angels, the arch-angels, Christ's mother, Christ himself, became actors: and these personages, though so nearly allied to paradise, were clapped or hissed, according as they acted their parts. I have been told that the Paris pit, as indeed it has no regard to persons, often hissed the Eternal Father.

But the mysteries of the Christian religion not being found entertaining enough,

enough, the characters of men were brought on the stage, men being always more ridiculous than doctrines; the public administration was also exhibited, and the system of the state set forth in farces. When the King of France had a mind to declare war against any power, and more taxes were wanting, he used to send for the players; and gave them an argument for a play which they were to act. Thus, though the people began with laughing, the conclusion was to pay the tax; and even this had still something more diverting than at present, when the only prologue to the tax is an arret, a piece of itself insupportably dull and jejune, and pleasing only to the gatherers.

The ministers of state and the grantees were also personated, without being able to help themselves; the players having the King's permission and privilege to expose their ridicules in this public manner. At present, customs, and the passions in general, are brought on the stage.

The theatre has two faces; sometimes its appearance is quite sad and melancholy, even to the very looks of the actors.

actors. The dagger and poison cover it with corpses; nothing but monuments, sepulchres, murders and assassinations. The next day the decoration is quite the reverse, the theatre is like a ball-room, rings with frolic and mirth, the actors are all sprightly and in high spirits; their solemn carriage is turned into hilarity and buffoonry. Yesterday they were sovereigns and noblemen, to day they are harlequins and dancers.

Death and jocularity may be said to take their turn in this theatre.

They who calculate every thing at Paris, affirm, that annually the dagger and poison carries off at this playhouse, three hundred Emperors, as many Kings, with five or six hundred princes; besides above five hundred virgins ravished, and twice the number of marriages. Though this be not the land of miracles, it is the land of resurrections; actors after having been killed times innumerable, always come to life again to kill the public.

LET-

LETTER LXV.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Peking.*

Paris.

THERE is not in the universe a more industrious people for destroying themselves than the Europeans: their progresses in the art of exterminating one another, are really amazing. The Greeks and Romans, with all their devastations, had but very scanty notions in dispeopling states; whereas the moderns make an end of them at once. The former were whole ages in desolating a country; at present one campaign does the business.

As mankind grew thin by quarrels; helmets, cuirasses, and other defensive armour, were invented: but it being found scandalous to go to war and not die in the field, they were laid aside.

Antiently darts were the only weapons used in battle; but this way of killing one another being thought too slow, pikes were added; and, on a second thought, that this was killing one another at too great a distance, the sword came

came in use as a shorter weapon ; and this close fighting was in time improved by the bayonet, which also gives larger wounds.

All these however were but very defective branches in the art of destruction. No sooner had a ray of light broke on this part of the universe, than gunpowder was invented ; a most admirable discovery for nations to finish each other ; hitherto strength and courage were requisite in war, but now having powder enough will do. This notable discovery led the way to the happy invention of the musquet and pistol.

At length the human mind, ever studious of improvements, by a noble stretch of its faculties, invented the cannon, a glorious monument of human sagacity ! With the musquet and pistol a man could kill only one of his fellow-creatures ; whereas with cannon he can sweep off a hundred. Fortresses now are become no safeguard ; the cannon battering down the walls, make a breach for the enemy.

In the mean while, the art of bombarding was rising to perfection, and such progresses did the Europeans make
in

in it, that they are able to destroy a large city, with all its inhabitants, in less time than the offended Deity takes to exterminate a profligate people, by an earthquake, the instrument of his vengeance.

Soon the infernal machine, a name of all others the fittest for it, made its appearance: all these instruments of human wickedness are kept in murderous edifices, here called arsenals; each state has within itself wherewith to destroy ten nations; and being so well furnished for mischief, they take care these destructive machines shall not lie idle.

Farther fresh improvements are daily making, and confirmed by experiments. I was yesterday at the trial of a cannon, which fired sixty times in a minute; an admirable invention for hastening the end of the world! It is only plying it briskly, and the nations will no longer complain of being too full of people.

I have computed that a battery of a hundred of these cannons will, at the rate above-mentioned, fire eight millions six hundred and forty thousand shot within twenty four hours, which is the precise number for getting rid of a whole nation in one day.

LET-

LETTER LXVI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at
Pekin.*

Paris.

A Dispute has lately arisen here, which makes a great deal of noise, for it proceeds from sounds. The point is, whether the Italian music be preferable to the French. As the debate relates only to the manner of affecting the air, the learned dissertations published on this subject tend merely to increase its agitation.

The dispute first broke out in ariettes and songs, and for a long time was carried on in small detachments of ballads; till afterwards whole bodies of national music declared themselves, and the action became general. Each party collected so many *chromas* and *semi-chromas*, as to be able to make volumes, shining with an erudition equally curious and insignificant.

It appears that the French have lost several musical pitched battles, and the Italians have totally defeated them, by a great superiority of solos and concertos. Sometimes a congress has been talked
of,

of for an amicable accommodation of this important dispute; but no agreement has ever been brought about. The mischief is, that the case is always referred to incompetent judges, I mean foreign nations, who know nothing of either of these musics.

A writer of Geneva, who at first charmed the public with works becoming a real philosopher, who has since wrote romances, and perhaps will conclude his literary course with almanacks, affirms, that whatever airs the Paris opera may give itself, the French have no such thing as music among them; and these, to demonstrate how grossly he is mistaken, have answered him with songs.

The substance of this famous quarrel is, to know whether the Chinese should sing like the Germans, or the French like the Turks? but neither party recurs to the original principle; the point is, whether the Italian music, to which most are inclined to give the preference above any other, contains all the expressions, together with all the accents of nature?

LETTER LXVI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se,
at Peking.*

Paris.

IN France religion is so far from being a check to luxury, that it extends every branch of it. Most of the houses are furnished with Christian virtues.

Some people here shall have ten thousand crowns worth of crucifixion, and in the houses of others you may see evangelical humility to the amount of one hundred thousand livres; the apartments are hung with apostles and saints of both sexes, to an immense value. Many a Magdalen is there, whose picture is in such a high taste of luxury, as to be above price.

I lately saw the whole Christian religion in luxury, or a compleat set of furniture in a French nobleman's hotel: all the pictures being originals, the connoisseurs esteem it a master-piece of Christian ostentation.

The creation decorates the first apartment. On one side is Adam and Eve in the terrestrial paradise; on the other, the
fall

fall of the latter, whence arose original sin. Cain's fratricide is expressed with great skill and taste; the deluge is by a masterly hand; all the beasts of the ark have a fine effect, and contribute to form a most noble piece of furniture. The tower of Babel, with the confusion of languages, is executed in all possible order.

The second is hung with the people of God. The golden calf, with the successive history of its idolatry, is divided into several compartments. Here Abraham and Moses make the principal figure; the latter going into Egypt to deliver his brethren from their rigorous captivity, is an invaluable piece.

The laws of the decalogue, which contain the whole plan for regulating the excesses of the human heart, are finely represented; and Moses shews a sense of the dignity of his office.

The luxury of the third consists of the Eternal's ark, the temple of God, and the history of Solomon.

The fourth is adorned with the nativity of Christ, the adoration of the magi, his death and resurrection; particularly strangers behold with admiration a

descent from the cross, as the Christians call it, which is a most splendid luxury.

This nobleman's steward told me that he had more than once been offered fifty thousand crowns for it.

Several *ecce homo's* have I seen ghastly with wounds, the produce of which, if sold, would heal those of many an indigent family ; but nobody will part with these, that they may not seem to degenerate from the luxury of their ancestors.

Some heads of families have been known, when dying, to forbid any diminution of this holy ostentation, thus perpetuating in their family Christian luxury and domestic penury.

Don't imagine that this religious vanity is to be found only among decent and moral people ; it is no less common among professed libertines : there's not an Atheist, if of any taste, who, when at home, does not see himself surrounded with patriarchs, prophets, and saints.

LET.

LETTER LXVIII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at
Pekin.*

Paris.

THE French may have as much wit as they please. Learning is prohibited among them; accordingly, their deepest erudition is no more than a superficial knowledge.

Sould a literato set up for genius, and rise above the common knowledge, he would soon be taken down, and made to keep within the general ignorance. This is by no means owing to a want of capacity; for the French, were they not curbed, would go as far as their neighbours in the most abstracted sciences.

The source of this ignorance lies deep, it derives from the very constitution. All would be lost should the nation once come to think geometrically, as thereby it would acquire a genius for demonstration, which this government can better do without. Its despotism has hitherto found its account in the national ignorance, and it does not know how public knowledge would suit with it.

Every thing is of consequence in a state where the prerogative is arbitrary. For instance, it is not a matter of indifference to France whether the sun moves round the earth, or the earth round the sun, because its physical errors are connected with its political system, and dependent on its constitution.

If a man of learning goes about to open his countrymen's eyes, care is immediately taken to shut his mouth. A philosopher would needs prove that there were irregularities in the course of the heavenly bodies; but he was made sensible that it was not his business to correct them. He was banished.

The bonzes and church-men, who are the guardians of public ignorance, would lose their authority, should they allow of indiscriminate knowledge; they especially keep an eye against any great progress in physics, as leading to the knowledge of God. The keeping of this gate is their main care; for the veil once rent, little or no power or influence would remain to them. Instead of giving law to others, they would be obliged to receive it; besides the trouble of being learned, as then they must be; and ignorance is
much

much more easy. The men of this class would be under a necessity of continually harrassing their minds ; whereas to know nothing, requires no trouble. Such a change would force them from that state of inactivity which the bonzes delight in ; and never would they have embraced this profession, had it been attended with labour and study.

The schools are forbidden to go above half-way in the sciences ; their institution binds them to make only smatterers, who are in reality ignoramuses.

The climate, which is here blended with politicks and religion, is said to hinder the French from being profound : but this I can hardly believe, as, amidst the general restriction, some writings, exposing the government and clergy, make their way into the public, and prove, that, with liberty, the French would think as deeply and accurately as any other European nation.

LETTER LXIX.

*The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin
Cham pi-pi, at Paris.*

Milan.

HAVING given thee an account of the women and the opera of Milan, I must not forget its temples. God is here entertained with a royal magnificence; very splendid palaces have been built for him; but that is all; nay, they seem to have provided such gorgeous mansions for him, only by way of contempt, most of the churches being made places of rendezvous for love-intrigues; and to be seen, or see, is what draws most of the congregations thither.

Religion, which among this superstitious people is an ingredient in every thing, forwards the intrigues of illicit love. Divine worship, in Italy; is of such use to debauchery, that with no religion there would be less vice. Set aside Sunday masses, and the anniversaries of saints on working days, the gallants would be sadly put to their shifts. Domestic rigour, owing to the jealousy of the climate, might keep wives and daughters

ters in order ; but fathers, mothers, and husbands, are quite bewildered by sermons, vespers, and benedictions.

Thus religion, the only curb for preventing a profligacy of manners, is made an instrument for corrupting them.

LETTER LXX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Superintendent of Religion, at Peking.

Paris.

THE other day the chevalier led me into a Christian pagod, where was a vast crowd, it being the anniversary festival of the idol of that place.

I was reflecting on the zeal of such a concourse of people, when a young man, of about twenty-seven years of age, cloathed in black, with a shirt over his robe, making his way through the crowd, came and seated himself in a little wooden nich, near where I was standing. He had a fresh complexion, and all the signs of a sanguine constitution.

He was scarce seated, when a young lady, rising from her place, went and kneeled before him, and began to whisper in his ear. The lady was extremely

pretty ; and tho' her face was covered, the young man, with whom she was discoursing, could see a great part of her bosom, on which her head leaned ; so that she could not breathe without his perceiving the motion of her breast. My companion, observing me to be under some amaze, said, I see this interview surprises you, but it will surprise you much more when I tell you, that it is one of the principal mysteries of our religion.

The box you see there is a confessional, the young fellow in it is a confessor, and the lady a penitent. She is now going to accuse herself of her frailties, and lay open to him her failings ; he will call her to account for her very thoughts, and inquire into her desires. This is called the seat of penance.

This is but a modern sacrament, scarce above five or six hundred years standing ; yet is it not the less divine, for God is this moment coming down from heaven, like a dove, on this nich. He will loosen the confessor's tongue, to absolve the penitent from all her sins ; and in case he has reasons for not doing so, the Holy Spirit, after coming on a sleeveless errand,

errand, will return up to heaven till fresh orders. No religion in the world affords a more wonderful art. Every thing in this tribunal is supernatural. The confessor must forget his being a man, and the penitent must beware of remembering that she is a woman.

That is, said I, a surprising sacrament indeed, for I did not imagine that such things could have been forgotten; but, added I, I can't conceive how the confessor does to avoid pronouncing the name of indecent things. Oh! he is put to no trouble about that; there is no need of mincing such pronunciations, for there is nothing more indecent among us than confession. A man who, in any other place than a confessional, should dare to put such questions to a woman, would be looked on as a vile fellow; and a woman returning the like answers, would be despised as an abandoned prostitute.

For instance, a confessor, in asking his penitent about her temptations, inquires strictly how often she has been tempted? Whether her yielding was not attended with a great revolution in her nature? Whether the sight of a handsome gentle-

man has not made an impression on her? Whether this impression did not produce an act? Whether this act was very sensible? Whether her dreams at night were not voluptuous? Whether these images caused in her any great emotions? Whether she did not perceive, at her awaking, that the dream had produced a reality?

If his penitent accuses herself of having yielded to an intrigue, he must know the time, place, and circumstances. If she owns an infidelity to her husband, he inquires how often? Whether the pleasure was very sensible to her? Whether she always retained her reason? Whether she did not fall into a swoon? The sacrament goes on, and God finishes the remainder.

Sir, said I, has the devil no share in this mystery? and does he never turn confessor among the Christians? for in my mind this sacrament gives him fair play.

Reflections arise here from all quarters. It is a defect in a religion to expose its ministers too much. The guides of men, in all sects, are themselves but men; the office, with which religion invests them, changes not the heart.

heart. They, whose calling devotes them to the Deity, have not received from nature the privilege of insensibility. However holy a worship be, it is relying too much on it, to expose its ministers to continual temptations, and expect that they shall tread them under foot.

Decency is of an order superior to those of any religion; or rather without decency there can be no religion, it being the basis on which all moral virtues rest. As a relation of the pleasures annexed to concupiscence makes impure sensations, it were better to let them be buried in eternal oblivion. They are putrid carcases, which, vitiating the air, infect those who remove them from the tombs. There are sins, to reveal which is committing several sins.

In this Christian sacrament, innocence is generally exposed to manifest danger. Ten confessions teach a girl more than the licentiousness of the world: for to know whether she is susceptible of the temptations suspected in her, she must be questioned; and these very questionings teach her, or put her on guessing what she had no thought of before.

It

It is alledged that the shame annexed to confession, is a strong restraint on women; this is a mistake, and shews the Christian moralists to know little of the human heart, which habituates itself to every thing; it is only the first avowal gives pain. A woman having once said that she has yielded to libidinous desires, will afterwards repeat the like a hundred times, without the least blush. They insist that this mortification is of itself a sacrifice. But why, particularly, make choice of auricular confession? Cannot a person humble herself before God, but a fellow creature must be witness of her devotion? The confessor has no business in the confession; for, if made to a man, it is of no effect; if to God, there is no need of a confessor.

I don't know any contrivance which could exceed this sacrament, for filling the earth with all sorts of enormities. The Christians look on it as a sponge, which at one brush totally obliterates sins; remembering to have confessed themselves, they forget that they are sinners. Penance keeps them from being penitent; they account a performance of the

the penance a total discharge of the debt.

There is more vanity in the confessor, than humility in the sacrament ; he talks as if he held the keys of heaven in his hands. The power he assumes is beyond that of all the potentates in the universe. Kings can make men happy only for a time, and imperfectly so ; the confessor makes them completely happy throughout all eternity. How could it ever be conceived that God should have communicated this attribute, the greatest of all, to a contemptible mortal ? All that the Mandarins of this sort have to answer is, that it is a mystery : it is so to be sure ; but the greatest mystery is, that it could ever be admitted by reasonable men.

This Christian institution, however, is far from being useless : it serves to uphold that ascendancy which the Christian pagod has always affected over subjects and sovereigns. Through it the bonzes and priests come at the knowledge of intrigues, and see into all the hidden weaknesses of the heart ; this sacrament draws aside the veil from the secrets both of families and courts.

Another

Another prodigy in this mystery is the metamorphosis which it causes in princes. To me it seems very strange, that a sovereign shall be suing for the remission of his sins, at the feet of one of his subjects, and a sinful man like himself.

LETTER LXXI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Prime Minister,
at Paris.*

Pekin.

THE morals of the eastern princes are not known to their subjects; the seraglio is separated from the empire by an impenetrable barrier: the sovereign there may give himself up to voluptuous desires, as much as he pleases, without his example having any bad effect on the state. The only witnesses of their irregularities are eunuchs, slaves to their desires, and purchased for the most infamous purposes.

In the west, the morals of Kings are exposed to every curious eye: their behaviour is transparent. There is nothing done in any part of the royal house, but is known; and fancy, without

out stopping in the antichamber, flies even to their bed. At Marli you are shewn the favourite slave's apartment, the very chamber where the King gratifies himself with her. That which she has at Versailles is known to every body, it is the first thing shewn to strangers.

The little apartments, with the suppers there, and what follows, have been the subject of many memoirs. There is not a man at Paris ever so little acquainted with court-intrigues, who does not know what passes in those recesses.

Last Sunday I was present at the opening of the billet of Versailles in the great walk of the *Thuilleries*, which was done in the presence of some hundreds. It is a journal of every the most important court-transactions in the ensuing week. An old half-pay officer, who has had the publication of it for twenty years past, after putting on his spectacles, and twice spitting to clear his voice, read as follows.

“ To morrow, being Monday, the

“ King holds a great council.

“ Tuesday, reviews the household.

“ Wednesday, gives audience to fo-

“ reign ambassadors.

“ Thursday,

" Thursday, goes a hunting.

" Friday, assists at a solemn Te Deum, as a thanksgiving for the prosperity of his arms, both by sea and land.

" Saturday in the evening, comes to the M—— at Bellevue, where he will sup and lye."

This may be called keeping a whole kingdom in waiting.

From the very nature of monarchical government, it is impossible for the monarch to follow his irregular desires, without being imitated by his subjects. His example is a center to which all the actions of private persons gravitate.

The history of French voluptuousness is founded on that of their Kings. Till Francis I. the French were rather gallant than debauched. This prince, who kept mistresses openly, and died of a disease called scandalous, from the consequence of his debaucheries, opened the door to libertinism; yet there were some remains of modesty, for it is not at once that a people becomes corrupted.

Henry IV. who made no secret of his amours, inflamed the nation's desires to great excess.

Lewis

Lewis XIV. being a voluptuous prince, and impetuous in his passions, by openly taking away the wives of his subjects, put the finishing hand to debauchery, so that under his reign it was almost general. His example being followed by the succeeding government, depravation overflowed all bounds.

There is not a woman here, and I speak even of those of some reputation for modesty, who does not look on dishonouring her husband as a mere trifle. They imagine themselves warranted by the sovereign's example, which, in a monarchical state, justifies every thing, even the most flagrant guilt.

LETTER LXXII.

The Mandarin Kié-tou-na. at Peking.

Paris.

THE most difficult of all sciences in Europe, is to know that one knows nothing; yet is there another rather more so, and this is to doubt of every thing.

In China we should laugh at a philosopher pretending to doubt that we exist, and saying that such a thing might be,
but

but it is not impossible that it might not be; and this is the usual talk of these Pyrrhonic fages.

It is agreed all over the world, that light makes day; yet here are some learned men, who will prove that light makes night.

This science has caused many revolutions in the human mind: books without number have been composed in proof that we are to doubt of every thing; and at length they are come to agree in nothing.

Great labour was required to demolish all principles, and accustom the imagination to float continually between truth and falsehood.

This science here has an influence on all concerns of civil life. A general uncertainty has spread through the nation, that it never knows what it would have. This dubitation has even reached the prince's cabinet, and presides at the council-board. One deliberation is ever contradicted by another. The great men hesitate between the system of peace and the scheme for continuing the war. They are at a loss which to close with, and the

the ministers are ever in suspense about what measures they shall take.

This fluctuation interferes also in trades, and has got footing in the concerns of private houses. A father of a family never knows what he shall do with his children. He first proposes such a calling for them, and soon after turns them over to another.

L E T T E R LXXIII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Peking.*

Paris.

EVERY courier brings an account of the defeat of one part or other of the French army now in Germany; and this is not for want of numbers, that army alone being sufficient to over-run Europe. A more dangerous war for France than that which its enemies are carrying on against her, is the divisions among her generals; their jealousies, piques and jarrings do infinite hurt to the monarchy. Amidst the private contentions of generals, the nation loses battles. The political quarrels of sovereigns

reigns are nothing in comparison to those differences ; expedients are sometimes found for reconciling the interest of princes, but the animosities of generals admit of no pacification. When two are sent abroad to fight the enemies of the state, the first thing they do is to thwart one another. There is always one who will pretend to be the most knowing, and consequently is ever finding fault with what the other does. The point who shall be master, is the great concern, and to it the interests of the crown are ever sacrificed.

The worst news either of them can hear is, that his colleague has gained an advantage over the enemy ; but, on being informed that by some blunder he has got a plunge, he can't forbear shewing his joy. Farther, they both carry on contrivances against each other, each endeavouring to make his rival fall into some snare. Sometimes they expose each other in printed pamphlets ; and though such libels are openly known to France and all Europe, I do not see any punishment follows. Here they put a man to death for killing another, whilst
nothing

nothing is done to a general who, in only one action, has been the cause of twenty thousand being butchered.

In Asia a general's head answers for the events of war; whereas in Europe, he is not so much as answerable for his evil intentions. Should he want conduct, and thus occasion the loss of a whole army, his only punishment is to be recalled. Had it not been for the avarice and monopolies of a French general, the war in the north would probably have been over: the enemy had run themselves into such a bad situation, that to have taken advantage of it must have brought about a glorious peace; but a German army purchased its liberty of him, and renewed the war. As to this venal French general, after so basely selling the interest of his crown, he quietly retired with several millions, part of which he has laid out in paying his debts and building fine houses. At present he is in a province, continually giving entertainments and living in splendor; and thus he enjoys, even with applause, an overgrown fortune, acquired at the expence of France's choicest blood.

What

What sayest thou to the King of France's clemency, whose moderation is such, as to see his people butchered without mercy, and not revenge such voluntary effusions of blood? In China, such an Emperor would be called cruel and barbarous. Were the heads of more generals stricken off, it would save many of the subjects theirs.

LETTER LXXIV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Port L'Orient.

Venice.

I AM got to Venice, that is, in the middle of the sea, in a huge ship built of stone, and kept at anchor by art and nature for above thirteen centuries.

The Europeans are oddities in every thing; rich and fertile lands they leave to birds of prey and wild beasts, whilst they themselves dwell in unhealthy marshes, with nothing to live on but shell-fish.

You may well conceive that this place does not abound in conveniencies, a ship being at best but an uncomfortable place. Venice wants the most essential thing in
life,

life, I mean fresh water. Then there is no going into the streets without a boat, unless, like a saint the Christians talk much of, one can walk on the water.

If you have a visit to pay, the compass and winds must be consulted; so that very often the visit must be delayed till there is hope of an easy passage. One may indeed walk over a great part of Venice along quays built for that purpose; but this is a very great inconveniency, for you must be continually going up and down bridges. Every one here keeps his equipage at anchor, which is a kind of tomb hung with black, where they regularly bury themselves five or six hours a-day.

One would think this city was built on springs, its pagods and palaces periodically sinking and rising from under the waters. Sometimes Venice is all sea, and there are other times when it is almost dry land. The Venetians seem to be so afraid of being joined to the continent, that they are daily inventing new engines for keeping their state afloat.

On entering this city, one inhales a soft air, extremely dangerous to virtue;

the whole city is a gaudy scene of shows, entertainments and diversions, all alike frivolous.

In other European states, the carnival lasts only a few days; here it is allowed to be made six months out of the twelve. The republic licenses it, and, at the same time, the going in disguise, which is no bad contrivance for the more diffuse practice of immorality.

LETTER LXXV.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Cotao-yu-te, at Peking.

Paris.

IT is a misfortune to a nation when a prince has passions, and a much greater when his ministers see into them. No sooner did the reigning prince's fondness for women break out, than all about him set themselves to commend this propensity. It might, perhaps, have died in the birth, had not those who are nearest his person, studiously made use of every way for encouraging it. On fixing his choice, all places rang with praises of it; flattery justified it, and made a
virtue

virtue of guilt; there was not in the whole kingdom so much as one honest man to represent to him the danger to which he exposed himself, the state, and his people. Wretched is the condition of kings ever excited to vice, without one friend to shew them the path of virtue! This is owing to the sovereign's lying so open when he gives himself up to that passion. He is gained through her who has already gained him; favours of all sorts flow more easily in this new channel: any thing is obtained, because the favourite can ask any thing. Besides, the disorders arising in society from the same passion go unpunished; for how can a prince punish a licentiousness, of which he himself sets the example? These are advantages which a virtuous prince will not hear of; he is not to be come at by such infamous ways; and the disorder of this passion he punishes with the greater severity, as he himself subdues its impulses.

I have carefully read over the history of most European governments, and find, that the more their princes have indulged a propensity to women, the great-

er has been the profligacy of the people, and confusion of public affairs.

LETTER LXXVI.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at
Pekin.*

Paris.

I CANNOT forbear, dear Kié-tou-na, disclosing my apprehensions to thee. I shudder at the thoughts of being in a kingdom utterly void of liberty, where every thing, even the voice itself, is enslaved; nay, here you are not so much as allowed to think.

I am to inform myself of the government of these people, the manners both of the nation and prince. In order to this, I must, in some measure, lay myself open; I must ask and inquire, and in this lies my greatest danger; it may create a suspicion of me, and here all the interval between suspicion and conviction, is the accusation.

China has no relation to France; their interests are diametrically opposite. Yet were it known that I am come to inspect into the constitution and usages of France,
I should

I should be taken up and buried for ever in a loathsome prison.

It is terrible to think, that one single enemy, or even an indiscreet babbler, may utterly ruin me. A man's freedom in France hangs by so slender a thread, that a false information always preponderates against it.

Yet this government is not like that of Turkey, where the prince's will is the supreme law. Here every one has a trial, but it never comes on till the party has rotted in prison. It is very seldom that such unhappy persons are discharged but by death.

I may perhaps reassume this point, as of the highest importance; for where the subject's liberty is not secured, instead of any government political or civil, there can be nothing but tyranny or despotism.

LETTER LXXVII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

THE Chevalier, who had some time before promised to introduce me into a society of Paris wits, lately carried me to a man of letters, who has a meeting of literati at his house, most of them authors, or affecting to be thought such. The company was mixed, consisting, to my surprise, of as many learned women as men of letters; for in Europe the case is quite different from Africa, where our ladies being confined at home, can distinguish themselves only by domestic qualifications: here they are allowed to aspire to the principal posts of the republic of letters, and enter the lists of genius against the other sex.

The Chevalier and I took care so to place ourselves in this assembly, that we could hear every thing said in it, without being much taken notice of.

I expected an exquisite conversation, and was preparing my mind before-hand
for

for receiving the different impressions of the brilliant fallies, which were to raise my admiration; but, instead of this, the company talked only of common things and in common terms, intermixed with much vulgar phraseology

These men of talents having thus spoken an hour, without saying any thing, Sir, said I to my guide, are these your great wits! The title of fine-genius seems to me easily purchased here; and if my self-love be not mistaken, I think, that I myself might put in for that honour.

The Cavalier, by his acquaintance with most of these literary persons, being well qualified to give me a farther knowledge of them, Sir, continued I to him, who is that long visag'd lady with pretty fine eyes? That, said he, is the Princess of R—b—c. She is a patroness of the Lyric arts, music and declamation, and on this account is reckoned a kind of author; for at Paris protection goes for composition. Methinks, replied I, this princess is a little out of place in this company. Very true, replied he, but our women of tip-top quality imagine, that, by associating with men of talents, the

world looks on them as geniuses; and thus they often debase themselves by the company they keep. Thus she, we are talking of, is ever among players and singers, a set of people whom no person of credit should see but on the stage; whereas they have free access to her house; and of this the spirit of slander has made a handle, to say, that with them she goes beyond representation.

Who, continued I, is that young lady next to the princess? She is of some rank, but it was her misfortune to make a kind of epigram; which took very much, and this trifling success has turned her brain: she fancies herself superior to all the poetical geniuses of antiquity; she talks and writes in metre, and if she favours a lover with a letter it is in *bouts-rimés*, which puts them to their wit's-end; plain prose being what they want from her, and not ambiguous verses.

Can you tell me who that is on her left hand, I mean what branch of literature is her favourite study? She is, answered he, profoundly versed in the abstract science of amorous tales: she is looked upon as a wit, having written a
romance;

romance; but the public will soon be undeceived, for she is going to print it.

And that fourth, said I, who sits next to the gentleman of the house, and seems in a brown study, who is she? O! answered he, nothing would serve her, but she must learn Greek, for our ladies here pretend to be better acquainted with it than the men: she is infatuated with Homer, and threatens the public with a new translation; this was her chief view in learning Greek, but unluckily she has forgot to learn Latin and French.

Now for the gentlemen, interrupted I; I do not greatly like your literary ladies. Who is that man facing us so very thoughtful? He is one, answered the Chevalier, who should have some genius, having written a book called the *Mind*, but this Mind seems to have deprived him of his judgment; he has been unmercifully persecuted, and the government has even appointed a special council to try him. His friends advised him to except against ignorant judges, who, as such, cannot be qualified for trying the mind. But the author has been found, contrary to the laws of erudition, to deal in the

M 5 finances,

finances, and, which is much against all the rules of literature, to have four-score-thousand livres a year. Now it is a maxim in France, that there can be no mind worth such an income. He has been obliged to retract, and own before an august court, that his mind had not common sense, and thereby he has in form of law given up part of himself.

Who is that other gentleman next to him? He is also an author. Some time ago he wrote a tragedy called Dionysius the Tyrant, which had some success; and since this metrical tyranny he has published several prosaic tyrannies, and at present every month tyrannizes over the public in a tyrannical pamphlet. A very tyrannical writer indeed! said I. Dionysius himself could not exceed him.

But who is that little man, so cold, and yet so conceited, with his nifty look, on the left almost facing us? Why he is a poultry scribbler, whose works are of a piece with his appearance. He has written the history of the kings of Rome, but in a manner little to the honour of those founders of that glorious empire. Since matters have begun to mend with him, he puts forth only fugitive pieces,

as

as insipid as his kings. He has got himself to be made comptroller of political news, and keeps the key of foreign gazettes, so that the Dutch cannot convey their periodical lies into France but by his leave. With this privilege he has been invested by the court, for here the government avails itself of every thing. I suppose we shall soon see a patent for selling ballads and story-books.

Who is that author behind all the others? He is no author, he is only a journalist. A journalist! what is that? He is one who thinks after authors have thought, and who prints what has been before printed. A journal requires no genius or wit, a few of the newest productions of the press will do. He may well sit behind all the others, being but the contemptible compiler of a literary paper which he publishes.

LETTER LX.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Cotaoyu-se,
Censor of the Empire, at Peking.*

Paris.

EVERY body here talks ethics, yet very few have any morality. There is a set of people at Paris, and a very numerous set, who are continually disputing on things they don't believe, and express a mighty zeal for maxims they do not practise. The libertines especially keep a great stir, and deal most in moral arguments. It is now the fashion to talk of virtue. In France morality is not less in vogue than romances. A fine gentleman must be so far acquainted with this part of knowledge, as to be able occasionally to cope with the doctors of the science.

But this fashion is not limited to the display of acuteness in argument; there is another use of it, much more important. Morality itself is made an instrument of corruption; it is now the shortest way to the perpetration of vice. A libertine who has a design on a woman, never fails making use of it.

Not

Not that she who suffers herself to be deceived, has more virtue than the deceiver; but it is agreed on both sides to carry an appearance of morality, and thus charge to surprize what is always the result of a tacit agreement.

The frank and open seducers are now in such disrepute that they can never carry their point. He who would succeed in vice, must take care to keep up a reputation for morality. A woman seldom holds out against a man who talks morally: if he proves to her that the delicacy of his sentiments would not allow of his dishonouring her from a principle of debauchery, or any other motive than virtue, the seduction seldom fails of taking effect. Thus is morality turned to a poison, and the only way left to religion for purifying the manners, is made use of to corrupt them.

LET-

LETTER LXXIX.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

THERE are people here who make gold, but by their poverty would little be suspected of having any thing to do with so gainful a profession. This is called the philosopher's stone, or the great work.

Its adepts are in the utmost indigence: the far greatest part of the Paris gold-makers have no kitchen; and as to their utensils, a few earthen pans full of liquor make the total.

This art has a long time been allowed to be a mere cheat; and yet every day some new cheat starts up. It must be an impatience to suddenly possess a large fortune, which betrays a man into this deceitful science.

The common roads to opulence are too long. Now the philosopher's stone promises the speedy attainment of immense riches. This stimulates, and
imme-

immediately sets about turning every thing into gold.

A hundred chemists ruined in blowing the fire, and dead of mere want only, if I may use the expression, fill up the ditches for the cupidity of those who, coming after them, tread on their bodies in the way to the like wretchedness.

The world will never be cured of the philosopher's stone. The vast advantages it promises are too infatuating. Besides, this fallacious science creates a kind of possession; the lively hope it gives of riches, however illusory, constitutes a kind of anticipated enjoyment.

Whilst men shall refer their happiness to some future period, without minding the present, they will give themselves up to this science, because it is ever feeding its practitioners with promises; and it is the cast of the human heart to grasp at promises.

LET-

LETTER LXXX.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

THE womens hair at Paris is very mischievous. On growing to any length it studies the art of pleasing. It is a net for taking men. I have been told of a lady who owes a great many of her conquests to a single lock.

It is every morning a long-winded business to give to a woman's hair the highest degree of coquetry it is susceptible of. In the mean time I cannot conceive why they take so much pains to make their hair grow down to their heels, and afterwards to truss it up on their heads, where, to me, it seems to make a very cumbersome bulk. Certainly the head of a French woman must be stronger than that of a man: for besides songs of all kinds, lampoons, satires, volumes of romances, and the endless names of stuffs, silks, head-dresses, trimmings, laces, blonds, tippets, ribbands, pompons, &c. with which it is stuffed, there is the additional weight

weight of two or three pounds of a white dust called powder, and five or six ounces of an ointment to which they give the name of pomatum.

In China the womens hair grows point-wise: one would think that in France it came out of the head in clusters. The man who has the arrangement of it, for this is always a man's office, divides it into two or three hundred equal parts, papers it up, and afterwards burns it with a red hot iron, thereby making it pliant and tractable.

There are at Paris four sorts of women, who distinguish themselves by the disposition of their hair, the *frizzles*, the *chestnuts*, the *napes*, and the *bucks*, from the name of a little dog with short round hair, and to which their head thus dressed out has no small resemblance. I pretty well see into the frizzles and chestnuts, and easily guess the drift of those who wear their hair flatted and turned up at the nape of the neck; but why some women in France dress themselves like dogs to please men, is, I own, past my comprehension.

LET-

LETTER LXXXI.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Venice.

A Foreigner intending to visit this republic, must leave his tongue at Fucina*, and come to Venice quite dumb.

Silence is the emblem of this government. Every thing in it is wrapped up in mystery. Polity here shrouds itself in a dense gloom.

At Venice babblers are buried alive in a leaden tomb. A man who has once spoken is condemned to eternal silence. Some, for only saying one word, have been mute these thirty years past.

This is horrid tyranny, speech being a faculty of the soul, over which the legislature has no just power, unless it disturbs the political and civil order; and even in this case its punishment should not go beyond reproof. A subject is here punished for speaking, equally as another for acting; which confounds both the degree of crimes and punishments.

* The port where they embark for that capital.

A se-

A senate standing in fear of the reflections of private persons, therein acknowledges its weakness.

We should form to ourselves a plan, and this being once laid down, we should leave second causes to act.

Good governments in former times never subjected speech to an inquisition: every one was at liberty to inquire into, and deliver his opinion of what every one was concerned to know, I mean the conduct of the administration. The public good being the object of government, it overlooked the animadversions of idlers.

At Rome the people could boldly speak their minds on affairs of state; and it was not till after the fall of liberty, and under weak and vicious emperors, that they were awed into silence.

Besides, a state, in suppressing general reflections, deprives itself of a great advantage; for among the people there are always some of a sound way of thinking; and their reflections are so far preferable, as they are clear of the prejudices common to place-men. In a word, a man has a right to think, and a member of society to speak.

LET-

LETTER LXXXII.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

I HAVE not shewn to any one the Chinese memorial, in which the husband inveighs against the Emperor for having taken away his wife. It would only be laughed at here. Morality is not carried so far as to make light of the prince's favour; at the first appearance of it, probity, honour and religion ground their arms. Such a pedantic morality would be pointed at.

So far are the husbands in France from accounting such a procedure an affront, that they look on it as an effect of the sovereign's highest esteem. A family here cannot be more highly honoured, than when the monarch is pleased to disgrace it for his pleasures. It is a dignity which husbands even solicit. At the election of the present reigning favourite, above a hundred memoirs were presented by married women for that high post, and most of them are said to have been dictated by the husbands. The following

lowing piece is very different from thy memorial. A husband himself invites his wife, then in the country, to come to town, in order to try whether she could not have the honour of prostituting herself to the King.

“ Madam,

“ The King has just broke with Madam
 “ de M——, he has, at present, no
 “ mistress; the place is vacant; and with
 “ your beauty, youth and wit, I make no
 “ doubt but that, if our sovereign casts
 “ his eyes on your person, you will fix
 “ his heart. You cannot doubt of my
 “ love and fondness; and, indeed, there
 “ is nothing which I will not do for your
 “ appearing before him with distinction.
 “ On receipt of this come away; we’ll
 “ go to court together, and I myself will
 “ present you to Lewis XV. There is
 “ no expressing the pleasure it gives me
 “ to think, that, probably, you will soon
 “ be in his arms. I am all in raptures
 “ at the eminence to which the prince’s
 “ passion will raise our house, and the
 “ great honour done to all our family.
 “ Ah! my dear spouse, may you, on
 “ reading this, overflow with exultation,
 “ as I do in writing it.”

A N-

ANSWER.

“ Dear spouse,

“ At the receipt of your letter I almost
“ fainted away with joy; I am
“ setting out, and shall fly with the
“ utmost dispatch to Paris. This is indeed
“ a proof of love. I am ravished
“ with the thoughts of it. Your letter
“ speaks the fond lover, the faithful
“ husband, and especially a probity becoming
“ the manners of our age. I
“ will not offer to diminish the glory of
“ your assisting me to subdue our
“ great monarch. I will march to my
“ sovereign’s bed under your colours;
“ and, to give the greater lustre to the
“ honour to which you aspire, I will
“ give you leave to undress me on that
“ night, when the prince shall consummate
“ your happiness and mine; I even
“ now already have a sense of the pleasure,
“ which my love for you will make
“ me taste in his embraces. Ah, my
“ dear spouse, may you feel those pure
“ raptures, which I do in this extatic
“ instant.”

Thou seest very well that thy memorial
would appear quite ridiculous in a
nation

nation where the husbands and wives so happily agree.

L E T T E R LXXXIII.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

AT Paris, my dear Kié-tou-na, taylor's are men of no small importance; they confer regard, and have fixed degrees of merit. Many a one who is bowed to, and makes a great deal of noise in the world, were it not for his taylor's art in the magnificence and fashion of his cloaths, would be looked upon no more than any other.

Perhaps I shall not easily convince thee of it; but thou canst not think how an embroidered suit attracts consideration.

I know a man who, after long courting the public notice in vain, was complaining to his taylor of the injustice of the age; and he not doubting of being well paid, closed with his humour, and has since dressed him out so flauntingly, that ever since his name is in every body's mouth.

These

These needle-work accomplishments are the more valuable, as they may be infinitely diversified. For instance, a taylor, by dresses of both seasons, gives a summer genius, and a winter merit, both highly finished, and in a modish taste.

Fine liveries are also distinguishing qualities. A nobleman, with half a dozen showey lackies, is sure to make a noise in town, and to be respected in all companies where that virtue is current.

Periwig-makers may indeed vie with taylor; the courts of justice especially owe to them no small part of their merit. Where would be the respect paid to the grave judges, without their ample square wigs? The foplings would be pitiful objects indeed without periwig-makers; for take away their chesnut or frizzled wigs, and what sort of figure would they make?

They have another very recommendable skill, of making old men look young. Two ounces of black hair shall put a head of sixty on a level with one of twenty. In this country people are frizzled from the cradle to the coffin.

LET-

LETTER LXXXIV.

The Same, to the Same, at Peking.

Paris.

AS I was lately looking over the papers of a foreign politician, who died about fifteen or twenty years ago, the following paper was found in his scrutore.

Political prophecy concerning Europe:

“ Verily, verily, I say unto you, that
 “ the man of the north, who is risen
 “ from little, shall one day be very
 “ great.

“ He shall spoil the eagle, and thus
 “ lay the foundations of his power.

“ He shall at first side with the cock,
 “ to humble the pride of the lion, the
 “ natural ally of the two-headed bird.
 “ He shall be censured, he shall be ri-
 “ diculed and laughed at, but soon shall
 “ he silence the voice of satire.

“ His soldiers shall put to flight the
 “ armies of young eagles, who have ta-
 “ ken the field to oppose his designs.
 “ His victories shall procure to him a
 VOL. II. N “ large

“ large dominion, which shall be left
 “ to him to keep him quiet.

“ But when he shall be thought slumbering in peace, he shall suddenly start up; his giants shall again spread like a torrent and invade the neighbouring states: his forces shall be like a tempestuous sea which no mound can stop. In excuse for the irruption, he shall say, that it is to prevent a conspiracy formed against him; though the only conspiracy is that of his own making.

“ Now he shall unite with the lion to curtail the power of the cock, and the cock and the two-headed bird shall league together.

“ Then terror shall overspread Europe; it will begin to fear. The Teutons, the Franks, the men of the country of Ice, and several petty nations of Germany, shall unite against him, but he shall beat them all.

“ The cock, dispirited by a ruinous war with the lion, shall make peace with him; and the eagle shall beg quarter of the man of the north, who shall grant it him on condition of keeping all he has got.”

So

So far the political prophecy might have been made from past events, but here it properly begins.

“ Verily, verily, I again say unto
 “ you, that the man of the north, who
 “ has risen from little, will not sit down
 “ so. At the conclusion of a peace, so
 “ far from dismissing his giants, he will
 “ exercise them, and form them a third
 “ time for sieges and battles. He will
 “ make separate treaties, secure himself
 “ allies, settle with them the number
 “ of auxiliaries which they are to fur-
 “ nish him. When every thing is ready,
 “ he will watch the instant of general
 “ lethargy, and then again open the
 “ sluices of his power. In this war his
 “ design will still be greater, and his
 “ views more extensive. His scheme
 “ will be the sovereignty of all Europe.

“ The man of the north shall pass
 “ over a great river with an army of gi-
 “ ants to attack the cock, leaving ano-
 “ ther behind him as a check on the
 “ eagle. Then shall the Franks mourn
 “ for having been the first instruments
 “ of his greatness. Their eyes will open,
 “ but it will be too late.”

LETTER LXXXV.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Venice.

THIS republic, like Genoa, has a sovereign, and this sovereign wears a like diadem, except that it bears a greater resemblance to a horn. Do not imagine it is similar to that of plenty, this prince being extremely indigent. His most serene highness is lodged, fed and cloathed at the republic's cost. He is a state-pensioner, who is allowed the bare natural necessities, with a few domestics for decorum: as for all the appendages of regal luxury, they must come out of his own pocket. The other princes of Europe better themselves by their sovereignty. With this prince it is quite the reverse, he beggars himself; there are several families at Venice in very low circumstances, purely from their ancestors having ascended the throne. Though the Doge of Venice be little better than a cornuted picture, thou canst not conceive how fond the nobles are of wearing a horn; there is
much

as much bustle and intrigue for this insignificant copy of sovereignty, as if it was an original.

This prince here has the power not to concern himself in any thing, and care is taken that he shall enjoy his privilege; he is no more than a figure or representation of the power of the state, for the Europeans are so fond of images, as to introduce them into their political governments. This sovereign does not seem much beloved by his subjects, at least no body goes into mourning at his death. That day, which every where else is devoted to sadness, is here a day of public rejoicings, as masquerades and balls: they alledge indeed, that the joy shewn on this occasion, does not relate to the deceased Doge, but is purely a compliment to their new sovereign, and the late prince is thoroughly forgotten, that they may the better mind the present.

LETTER LXXXVI.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Pekin.

Paris.

WERE I to follow the example of multitudes of people here, who give themselves unwearied trouble to idle from morning to night, I should spend my life in the coffee and play-houses, and the public walks; I should indolently rise from one place and creep to another, and thus kill time as lying heavy on my hands: but not being so much at leisure as to have nothing to do, I avoid those places which offer no employment to the mind.

Not that I fatigue my mind, for, like the body, it must have its recreations; it must, if I may be allowed the expression, have its breathing times.

The first thing I do in the morning, after dressing myself, is to write down the places where I am to be in the day-time; and, at night, before going to bed, I commit to paper all that I have seen, heard and read worth the notice of our court; still I do not sequester myself
from

from company, I make one at the walks, and sometimes go to the play.

Paris is made up of contradictions; some people here seem to have made a vow of inaction, and others of incessant labour; the latter scarce allow themselves time to perceive they exist.

A few days ago I was shewn one of these studious men, who is constantly at his books nineteen hours a-day, and makes up the twenty-four with allowing one for aliment, and four for sleep. His study is, as it were, his tomb whilst living; it is odds but he will be for haunting the beloved place when dead.

LETTER LXXXVII.

The Same, to the Superintendant of Religion, at Peking.

Paris.

THE Europeans look for the Deity in their schools, when he is only in heaven. They make a science of the Supreme Being, and are continually arguing on what is beyond all argumentation.

They pretend to define God's nature, and say that he is a perfect essence, thus

debasing that very Deity of whom they are for setting forth the perfections.

Man is finite and God indefinite; now there can be no relation between two beings, of which one has a beginning, and the other is without an end.

All the qualities of man are connected with the subject of his essence, and to this alone relate all his senses and ideas.

To say that God is a perfect Being, means no more than that he is all those perfections of which the human mind can form any idea. Now this idea of perfection, relatively to God, is mere imperfection.

The ancients covered some of their Deities with a veil, thereby intimating that the nature of them was incomprehensible; which, I think, was a great piece of wisdom.

Those schools where the essence of God is discussed, I would have shut up, as meddling with a science to which human understanding is not equal; and it were well that all religions should be reduced into moral practice.

Where is the use of speaking about what we do not understand? and pretending to define what is above definition,
by

by a knowledge so imperfect and weak as ours? Would it not be better to worship God as he is, than to spend our lives in studying what he is not?

LETTER LXXXVIII.

The Mandarin Sin-ho-ei, to the Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, at Paris.

Venice.

PEOPLE here are divided into two orders, nobility and commonalty; both are branches of the same stock, only the former got their names written in a gold book, which the others forgot to do; so that the whole difference lies in the book.

Some, to repair this want of memory, procure themselves to be inrolled, but for this a considerable sum must be paid to the editor; so that the golden book is become so in a double sense; and the whole difference between a noble and commoner, lies in the sum for inrollment.

The nobles of the new edition, however, are so far from being on a level with the antient in esteem, that the open contempt shewn to them, makes them

grudge the purchase-money of their honour.

The antient families, alone, are treated with a distinction due to their rank ; and, it must be owned, they thoroughly deserve it. A nobleman of an antient descent, to enjoy all the regard his birth can claim, must have walked the *Broglio* thirty years, intrigued for the principal posts of the republic, protected a good number of women, been noted for playing deep, have kept mistresses, hounds, horses, and equipage, on the *Brenta*, &c. &c.

Yet let us not think that virtue is totally extinguished at Venice. No, the republic still affords very great men, who adorn their rank with all the exalted virtues of the Romans, their progenitors.

LETTER LXXXIX.

The Mandarin Cham-pi-pi, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na, at Peking.

Paris.

IT is happy for us, dear Kié-tou-na, that the largest tract of the universe to which we belong, is under the dominion of one only sovereign. Were it not
for

for that absolute power which has absorbed all the rest, China, like most of the other empires of the world, would now be the scene of slaughter and war.

I have searched into the cause of those incessant contests, by which Europe has for several ages been torn to pieces, and it seems to lie in the divisions of the general power.

Every nation in Europe is a particular family, which is nearly concerned to weaken another; this is called the interests of princes. It greatly heightens the character of a state to have diminished the strength of a neighbour, and grafted its own greatness on the ruin of an adjacent power. The great family is dismembered, in order to augment the strength of the smaller, and the destruction of that leads to the period of these, the branches being incorporated with the stem.

All the divisions of the political interests from the body of Europe, answer no good purpose. The general confusion will ever affect particular states.

Let us suppose the collective power to consist of fifty degrees of strength; if wars and divisions deprive it of ten, the

particular nations composing that power will become weak in proportion. The cause of this universal weakness not being felt, is that it is almost imperceptible; the general power being apparently ever the same.

But were this debilitation merely ideal, there is still a real and no small evil, the calamities of the people.

Most of the historians of the continent tell us, that, about the middle of the last century, a Christian prince had thoughts of invading Europe, or, which is the same thing, of reducing it into one single dominion; and that all nations were extremely terrified at such a design, that is to say, they were afraid of being made happy.

It is something very strange, that tho' most of the European nations groan under their present yoke, they would rather absolutely perish, than allow a greater power to interfere for their deliverance.

LET;

LETTER XC.

*The Same, to the Mandarin Kié-tou-na,
at Pekin.*

Paris.

I HAVE heard the soul compared to a tablet, on which our ideas are written. If so, nothing is written on the souls of most Frenchmen. Seven-eighths of them are mere automata. They have a soul indeed, but a very stupid one, without understanding or knowledge.

Genius depends on education ; and as the number of persons educated is very small, all the others are left to their natural rudeness. It may be said, that there is scarce a Frenchman in France.

I have been assured, that four millions of the mighty King Lewis's subjects know not a letter in the alphabet, and above six millions never had a pen in their hands. No education is to be had here without wealth. It is only the easy families which are in the way of learning to be Frenchmen.

Not

Not that France is without public schools where learning is to be had for nothing ; but these schools are so ill managed, that they rather spoil than form the mind. The good masters are only to be found among the children of the rich. Here the state is nothing better for education. Were it not for the climate, the French people would be the most stupid in the universe.

LETTER XCI.

The Same, to the Mandarin Prime Minister, at Peking.

Paris.

A GOVERNMENT by being too strict and particular in its enquiries, exposes itself to ridicule, and satire will not fail to lash it most severely. I herewith send you the copy of a paper, which is privately read with great satisfaction, as a libel on such abuses.

“ *Memorial* ”

“ *Memorial to his Excellency the Count de*
 “ *St. Florentine, Minister and Secretary*
 “ *of State for Paris.*

“ Your excellency’s zeal for main-
 “ taining the honour of the crown, to-
 “ gether with your vigilance and pains
 “ in banishing, imprisoning, and other-
 “ wise punishing such of the King’s sub-
 “ jects who presumed to complain of
 “ their distresses, has silenced every bo-
 “ dy. But, my lord, to have deprived
 “ the people of the use of speech, is not
 “ enough ; the public tranquillity and
 “ good policy farther require, that cer-
 “ tain mute invectives against the go-
 “ vernment, uttered every day, without
 “ speaking, should be prevented.

“ For instance, there are in Paris ma-
 “ ny ill-affected persons, who only with
 “ looks and motions openly arraign the
 “ administration, and vent the most bit-
 “ ter complaints against it without say-
 “ ing a word. Others there are, whose
 “ offence is still greater ; they who, in
 “ their sleep, have had dreams derogatory
 “ to the marchioness’s glory, and that of
 “ the ministers of state, these are treason-
 able

“ able crimes of which your spies have
“ no scent.

“ For putting a stop to such mischiefs,
“ the consequences of which may prove
“ extremely detrimental to the French
“ monarchy, I would propose to your
“ excellency two institutions.

“ One is an inspector general of looks
“ and grimaces; the other a dream-of-
“ fice.

“ For the first post I have an Italian,
“ who is himself a very skilful panto-
“ mime; he knows a man's meaning by
“ the bare motion of his eyes; in the art
“ of decyphering gestures, he has scarce
“ his equal; there is not a contortion
“ nor grimace in nature, but he imme-
“ diately sees whence it arises; he can
“ discover the malice of a smile, and to
“ him the least motion of the body or
“ the arms, lays open the motions of the
“ mind.

“ For instance, if at a panegyric on the
“ marchioness in a coffee-house, any one
“ lifts up his eyes, he will immediately
“ have him taken up. If on hearing the
“ treasurer extolled, one of the company
“ bites his lips, he will secure him. If
“ at hearing the conduct of our generals
in

“ in Germany praised, and our cam-
 “ paigns there magnified, a man shakes
 “ his head two or three times, and ab-
 “ ruptly goes from his place, he will
 “ make him his prisoner.

“ As to the dream-office, this the su-
 “ preme power must take in hand; such
 “ an establishment cannot be erected
 “ without an arret from the King, injoin-
 “ ing all his good and faithful subjects to
 “ inform the office of all their suspicious
 “ or ambiguous dreams, against the mi-
 “ nistry and persons in favour. To this
 “ purpose a second inspector of bed-sides
 “ ought to be established in every ward,
 “ and he every morning should go and
 “ take an account of dreams, and re-
 “ port them to your excellency, that be-
 “ fore ten o'clock you may be informed
 “ how the people slept concerning state-
 “ affairs. This office is of great impor-
 “ tance to the safety of the crown. Your
 “ excellency is too well acquainted with
 “ antient history, not to know, that a
 “ Roman Emperor put a person to
 “ death, for having dreamt that he had
 “ cut his throat; saying, that he would
 “ not have dreamt of it in the night, if
 “ he had not thought of it in the day.

For

“ For the sake of clemency a distinction might be made in this nocturnal high treason into weighty and impressive dreams, and the light and volatile. For instance, a person seeing in a dream the marchioness with a pale and faded face, and with her the King, wondering himself at his fondness for her after the loss of her charms, should be exiled only for three months; but should he dream that she is disgraced, and that the King has ordered her to quit the court, this being downright high treason, he and his family should be banished the kingdom for ever.”

LETTER XCII.

The Same, to the Same, at Peking.

Paris.

EVERY one here pretends to direct the affairs of all Europe. Paris swarms with people continually beating their brains about regulations.

A general congress for terminating the quarrels of the belligerent powers was no sooner begun to be talked of, than immediately came out a plan for preventing the

the

the difficulties which the plenipotentiaries of the sovereign courts might occasion in this assembly. As I thought the piece something curious, I send it thee. I suppose it is a banter on the minute formalities of ministers.

Regulations for the Establishment of a Congress.

ART. I. The five great belligerent powers, now at war, being desirous of peace, shall cause to be made five easy chairs for the use of their plenipotentiaries at the congress.

II. To prevent all mistakes, and that no *qui pro quo* of ranks may retard the general peace of Europe, there shall be a distinction of colours. France's easy chair shall be of white velvet, the Queen of Hungary's of green, and the like of the other crowns, according to their liveries.

III. These easy chairs shall be three feet broad, and four deep, except that for the plenipotentiary of Great Britain, which is to be eight deep; an English ambassador's back side being as big again

as

as that of a Frenchman, a Prussian, or a Muscovite.

IV. A large easy chair of red velvet, shall, though only for form's-sake, be set for the Spanish mediator ; but this chair shall be empty, without any mediator sitting in it.

V. There shall be four common chairs for the ambassadors of Poland, Sweden, Denmark, and the United Provinces.

VI. All the envoys of the petty German princes shall sit on stools ; and should they insist on chairs of any kind, they shall be expelled the assembly, as the peace of Europe may be brought about without them.

VII. The congress-chamber shall be measured geometrically, and divided into as many different parts as there shall be negotiators.

VIII. And that no plenipotentiary may trespass on the ground of another, and insensibly elbow out one who precedes him, the parts shall be separated by boundaries.

IX. The plenipotentiary of France shall have the precedence of all others, and speak the first, not on account of the antiquity of this monarchy, or as if
such

such precedence was its right, but as being the greatest sufferer.

X. The next to him, for the like reason, shall be the Queen of Hungary's plenipotentiary, and thus of the others, as far as the King of Prussia.

XI. The French minister shall speak in a supplicatory voice, the Hungarian with a mortified countenance, the Russian is to sigh, the elector of Saxony's minister to weep; but the voice of the King of Prussia's minister shall be strong and decisive, that of the English negotiator, sonorous and definitive.

XII. The French agent shall be in a kind of undress, the Imperial negotiator in a plain suit, the Polish Ambassador in deep mourning, the Prussian in an uniform, the Muscovite like a money-dealer, the ambassador from England alone to be in a full dress.

XIII. Nothing to be talked of at this congress, but the business on which it meets.

XIV. The treaty of Westphalia not to be mentioned.

XV. Not a word of indemnification or compensation.

XVI. The

XVI The plenipotentiaries shall especially forbear these, or the like expressions: *The king my master will have it so; such are the ultimate intentions of the monarch whose rights I assert. If this be insisted on I am gone: I protest against this article; I break off the negotiations; I cannot sign on any other conditions.*

XVII. There shall be no visits nor private conferences during the negotiation. The minister of England shall not have any intercourse with the Prussian; and the King of France's ambassador shall not be seen with the Queen of Hungary's.

XVIII. Instead of Burgundy and Champagne, which shall be totally prohibited, the negotiators shall drink only small white Rhenish, the fumes of which cannot obstruct the happy termination of the congress.

XIX. The ambassadors are not to make feasts, nor to spend the night at cards or dice, nor to give entertainments to the ladies, till the treaty shall be signed.

The END of the SECOND VOLUME.



